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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia.

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

We acknowledge today, O Lord, Your power, mercy, and grace. We need Your power, for the challenges we face require more than human wisdom and strength. We need Your mercy, for we transgress Your law and fall short of Your glory. We need Your grace, for we cannot offer anything to merit Your favor or gain Your love.

Lord, empower our Senators for today's journey. Give them confidence to draw near to You that they may find grace to help them in this time of need. May they pass their days in the companionship of Your eternal presence. Enable them to learn the stewardship of time, energy, and abundance. And Lord, we continue to pray for Ukraine.

We pray in Your sovereign Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Presiding Officer led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will please read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, July 12, 2022.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RAPHAEL G. WARNOCK, a Senator from the State of Georgia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

PATRICK J. LEAHY,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WARNOCK thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Ashish S. Vazirani, of Maryland, to be a Deputy Under Secretary of Defense.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. McCONNELL. We all know inflation and the economy are the biggest problems facing Americans today. The New York Times released a poll just yesterday showing a full 93 percent of

working-age Americans are dissatisfied with the state of our economy. We are a big and a diverse country. Ninety-three percent of Americans hardly ever agree on anything, but Democrats are unifying the country in unhappiness at the dark path down which they have taken our economy.

Monmouth University released some data explaining why Americans are feeling so sour. Forty-two percent of Americans are struggling to stay afloat financially at the highest rate ever—ever—in this poll's entire history, even higher than the darkest days, the days of the COVID pandemic.

Sixty-three percent of Americans named economic issues as their chief concern. And they know who to blame for their misfortune: President Biden and congressional Democrats, who plowed \$2 trillion into our economy last year and created the highest inflation in four decades.

I am sure many of my colleagues heard heart-wrenching stories from constituents struggling with inflation during the past 2 weeks' State work period. I certainly did in Kentucky, where the average household now spends more than \$500 more a month than they did before President Biden took office.

At a meeting with homebuilders in Northern Kentucky, local employers told me their businesses were poised to slow down dramatically. For 2 years, they struggled as Washington Democrats' exacerbated supply chain hiccups and worker shortages with free-wheeling spending policies. Now, as the Fed tries to rein in inflation by hiking interest rates, home buyers have to contend with the most expensive borrowing environment in over a decade. Homebuilders foresee their industry literally stalling out.

In Paducah, I sat down with some of Western Kentucky's barge operators. Like the homebuilders, they are concerned with ongoing worker shortages, inflation, and of course spiraling fuel

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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costs. They also rightly worry that power outages could hit the Commonwealth in the coming months.

Washington Democrats pursued environmental goals crafted by activists with no sense of how the real economy functions. They sidelined powerplants that use cheap, reliable energy sources without acknowledging that shortages would occur when the wind doesn't blow or the Sun doesn't shine. Independent electricity reliability experts have been sounding the alarm that two-thirds—two-thirds—of the United States could endure electricity blackouts this summer.

Then, Kentucky's ongoing labor shortage hit home during a meeting with bourbon distillers in our famous Bluegrass region. As the distillers explained to me, the programs implemented by Washington Democrats in their \$2 trillion spending package last year encouraged workers to exit the workforce and stay on the sidelines. The Commonwealth still has 20,000 fewer workers—20,000 fewer workers—than we did before the pandemic. So hamstrung by a lack of employees, these Kentucky businessowners are watching apprehensively as Washington Democrats debate another dose of bad policies.

This time, our colleagues are reportedly cooking up a trillion dollars in massive tax hikes on things like small businesses and domestic energy. When you tax something, you get less of it. That is the way it works. I don't know many Kentuckians who think America needs fewer small business jobs or less American energy. I am not certain about the good people of West Virginia either.

One estimate has found that almost half of all the jobs in all of West Virginia are tied to small businesses, the vast majority of which are passthroughs. Half of all the jobs in the entire State are provided by passthroughs.

I can't imagine the people of Pennsylvania or Ohio or a number of other States are especially keen to have fewer small business jobs, higher prices passed on to consumers or less American energy either. Yet each of these States and many others have a Senator apparently keen—to champion these bad ideas.

The nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation has proven that the policies that Democrats are floating would completely break President Biden's promise not to raise taxes on the middle class below \$400,000. The JCT says their bad ideas would create a tax hike for more than a quarter of all Americans who earn between \$75,000 and \$100,000 and more than half of the people earning between \$100,000 and \$200,000. They are taking President Biden's promise not to raise taxes on anybody below \$400,000 and putting it through the shredder—putting it through the shredder.

This all-Democratic government has already spent America into runaway

inflation, and now—now—they want to tax us into a recession.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. President, now on a different matter, yesterday, I discussed the Supreme Court's historic, courageous, and correct decision in *Dobbs*, but that landmark case was only part of the most consequential Supreme Court term in almost 70 years, since *Brown* overturned *Plessy* in 1954.

For example, in the space of 1 week, the Court took two huge leaps forward for religious liberty. Two big steps to restore and strengthen Americans' First Amendment right to pray and worship how they choose and raise their kids accordingly.

Time and again, we have seen opponents of religious diversity argue that government ought to discriminate against faith-based undertakings and organizations. These efforts have spanned from the anti-Catholic Blaine amendments of the 1800s to today's efforts by the secular left to chase religion out of the public square. We have had Democratic politicians try to force nuns to pay for birth control against their will. Forty-nine of fifty Democrats just voted for a radical bill that would have forced faith-based hospitals—listen to this—forced faith-based hospitals to perform abortions against their principles.

Last year, Washington Democrats tried to pass a sweeping toddler takeover that was written to squeeze out faith-based childcare providers and secularize early childhood care in this country. For goodness' sake—for goodness' sake—5 years ago, a Lutheran preschool in Missouri had to argue all the way to the Supreme Court that it deserved equal access to widely available funding for updating an outdoor playground. Textbook anti-religious discrimination. Fortunately, they won easily 7 to 2. This is indeed a new Supreme Court.

Last month, the Court took another landmark step. The case of *Carson v. Makin* arose because the State of Maine had established a school voucher program that tried to uniquely discriminate against faith-based schools. In effect, the government was using taxpayer money to nudge families away from faith-based education and toward secular private schools instead.

The Court rightly struck down that law. Chief Justice Roberts explained that Maine could not exclude accredited and otherwise eligible schools purely because they are religious. That is not the government's choice to make. It is up to the parents.

A few days later, the Court issued another important and commonsense ruling. Joseph Kennedy, a high school football coach from Washington State, was fired—listen to this—simply because he quickly and quietly offered a simple prayer on the field after the game. He got fired for that. The man was fired by government bureaucrats for praying in our country.

The Court ruled for Coach Kennedy under both the free speech and free ex-

ercise clauses of the First Amendment. Thank goodness. In the process, Justice Gorsuch and his colleagues cleared away many years of phony, made-up legal tests that made our laws needlessly hostile to religion and turned back to what the Constitution actually says.

So the Court's term was an exciting one for Americans of faith who simply want to be allowed to live out their faiths and raise their kids. But this was a win for the entire country. Americans of any faith and no faith at all can celebrate that we have a brilliant majority of originalist, textualist Justices who will defend all of our constitutionally guaranteed freedoms and apply what the Bill of Rights actually says.

In a better world, neither of these commonsense rulings would have been close calls or breaking news, but since they were, they were very good news indeed.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, on June 24, the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, returning the question of abortion to the States and to the people and their elected representatives.

The Supreme Court's decision was an affirmation of democracy, which had been set aside by *Roe* in favor of a national abortion regime imposed upon the entire country by a handful of activist Justices. *Roe* took legislative power out of the hands of the people and put it in the hands of unelected Justices on nonexistent constitutional grounds. The Supreme Court's decision puts the question of abortion back in the hands of the States and the people and their elected representatives, where it should always have been.

I am profoundly grateful for this decision, most especially because of what is at stake here, because the *Roe* decision was not a failure of constitutional jurisprudence on some arcane point; it was a failure that infringed on our most fundamental rights as human beings—in fact, on the fundamental right: the right to life.

Roe not only allowed for but imposed a regime that forced States to legalize the killing of unborn human beings. So the decision to overturn *Roe* not only affirms democracy and repairs a constitutional wrong, it allows for the righting of a profound moral wrong: the legal killing of unborn Americans.

The Supreme Court's decision does not, of course, make abortion illegal, but it will finally—finally—allow those States to choose to put in place protections for unborn children.

Since *Roe v. Wade* legalized abortion through all 9 months of pregnancy, more than 63 million children have been killed in this country by abortion—63 million. It is an unfathomable number and, frankly, a heartbreaking number. To put it into some kind of perspective, that is more than twice the population of the State of Texas and more than 70 times the population of my home State of South Dakota. Sixty-three million. Sixty-three million unique, unrepeatable human beings—future doctors and nurses and farmers and teachers and busdrivers and plumbers and scientists. That is a lot of innocent lives lost.

And, yes, when we talk about unborn babies, we are talking about human lives. Members of the pro-abortion left would like to obscure this fact, but science and medical technology and plain old common sense, I would add, all clearly demonstrate the humanity of the unborn child. Every mom who has ever felt her unborn baby kick is well aware that she isn't just carrying around a clump of cells, and ultrasound technology and medical advancements have made the humanity of the unborn child even more undeniable. It is impossible to hear the heartbeat of an unborn child at 6 weeks and say that he or she is not alive. It is impossible to look at an unborn baby on an ultrasound kicking her feet and moving her hands and sucking her thumb and to pretend that she is anything but a human being. And human beings deserve to be protected.

Democrats' response to the Dobbs decision has been predictably hysterical. We have heard cries to pack the Supreme Court because apparently the only legitimate Supreme Court is a Supreme Court that rules in line with Democrats' policy preferences. We have heard cries to abolish the filibuster and to eliminate protections for the minority party in the Senate and the Americans whom it represents. We have heard a proposal to establish abortion facilities in national parks.

I am struggling to think of any family who wants an abortion facility to be part of the itinerary offered on their trip to Yellowstone or the Badlands of South Dakota; but, apparently, some Democrats think our national parks should become abortion factories.

Then, of course, there is the flood of misinformation out there falsely suggesting that pro-life laws would prevent women from getting essential medical care for miscarriages and ectopic pregnancies. And on top of all this, multiple Democrats have started a crusade against pregnancy resource centers. That is right. Pregnancy resource centers—which were established to provide moms in need with things like diapers and baby clothes, prenatal and parenting classes, help connecting with State and local resources, emotional support, and agency referrals for moms who want to choose adoption—are now under attack by members of the Democratic Party.

Apparently, the pro-choice party can't stand the idea that women might be offered a choice other than abortion.

When the Dobbs decision was handed down, the President called it a sad day for our country—a sad day. To the President and his party, apparently it is a sad day when the doors open to greater protection for human life and human rights. I would say that it is a sad day when the right to kill unborn human beings has become the signature issue of the Democratic Party, when the party that portrays itself as the defender of the little guy has become the party that wants to deny even the smallest protection to the littlest guys and girls among us.

The Democrats' vision of America is not my vision of America. I believe that America is big enough to take care of both moms and their babies. We don't have to pit moms and babies against each other. We can take care of them both. It is something the pro-life movement has been focused on for years and something that a number of States have worked to do with their Alternatives to Abortion programs. And I know that commitment will only grow in the wake of the Dobbs decision.

Those who seek to deny human rights to some human beings are never found to be on the right side of history, as our Nation knows, to its sorrow. Our country was founded to protect human rights—the right to life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness; but for almost 50 years now, our country has failed to protect the human rights of unborn human beings.

Today, thanks to the Dobbs decision, we have a chance to change that. We have a chance to build a society where the life of every American is valued and where being small and vulnerable does not mean that your human rights are any less respected. At our best, we are a country that defends human rights, not denies them. We stand up for the innocent. We protect them. We fight for them. It is time to live up to that.

The Dobbs decision gives us a chance to protect the human rights of the smallest and most innocent humans among us, but the Dobbs decision would never have happened without the tireless work of so many since the day *Roe v. Wade* was decided. It would never have happened without those who prayed, who offered help to moms in need, who fought for the rights of unborn Americans in elections, in courts, and in State legislatures.

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves," it says in the book of Proverbs, and for 50 years that is what members of the pro-life movement have done. And it is their work that has brought us to this day when we finally, once again, have a chance to protect innocent unborn Americans in law. May the Lord reward their work and their wages be full from the Lord.

I know that sometimes it seemed like the day when *Roe v. Wade* would be

overturned would never come, but it is here. And while there is still much work to be done to ensure that the human rights of unborn Americans are respected and that moms and their babies have the support they need, it is, nevertheless, a moment for joy and for gratitude. I am profoundly grateful for this decision, profoundly grateful that we now have the opportunity to move closer to the day when we fully live up to our founding principles and ensure that every American—born or unborn—has the opportunity for life, for liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

I yield the floor.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senator from Texas.

INFLATION

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, month after month, week after week, day after day, family budgets are being battered by inflation—inflation made worse by the reckless spending habits of the Federal Government and particularly of the Biden administration.

Gas prices are up nearly 50 percent from a year ago, and grocery bills—as any of us can see when we go to the grocery store—have soared. From eggs to milk to meat to produce, everyday essentials cost more today than they did last year.

The pain of inflation is having a dramatic impact on the American people. This quote from the *New York Times* yesterday sums it up pretty well:

Widespread concerns about the economy and inflation have helped turn the national mood decidedly dark, both on Mr. Biden and the trajectory of our nation.

It is a sentiment I have heard over and over again in my conversations with my constituents in Texas, and it is one that is increasingly visible in public surveys. A recent poll from the *New York Times* and Siena College found that more than three-quarters of voters think that the United States is headed in the wrong direction—three-quarters of the country. Only 13 percent said the country was on the right track.

With voter confidence at a concerning low, our Democratic colleagues have made an interesting calculation. They are trying to resurrect their "Build Back Broke" agenda. Now, you may remember this bill, which was called Build Back Better, but I think it can more accurately be described as "Build Back Broke" or "Build Back Bankrupt." This bill went out with a whimper last year because our Democratic colleagues didn't even have the support among their Members to pass it in an evenly divided Senate where the Vice President breaks the tie.

So they have now chosen this moment, for some reason, to bring it back. To have a shot at passing this proposal, our Democratic colleagues have slimmed and trimmed the bill, but it still packs a painful punch, especially where it has to do with energy prices.

Last month, the national average of gasoline exceeded \$5 a gallon for the

first time on record—5 bucks a gallon, plus. Since then, prices have fallen some, but the national average today is still \$4.66 a gallon. Now, that is better than \$5, but it is certainly no reason for celebration, and it still costs almost 40 bucks more to fill up a pickup truck today than it did a year ago.

In standard fashion, the Biden administration has tried to blame someone else. Mr. Biden has implausibly blamed Vladimir Putin for the high price of gasoline. So rather than acknowledge the impact of its own policies which have discouraged investment in new production, new supply, the administration is trying to blame the very energy companies that we are depending on to produce more oil and gas so we can make more gasoline and so we can bring the price down.

I have heard from oil and gas producers in Texas who are working to ramp up production and bring down prices for consumers. It is as if the law of supply and demand has somehow been repealed during this administration. They simply don't get it that if you want to bring down the price of something, you need to increase supply or reduce demand. This administration doesn't understand that it is not as simple as just pushing a button on a machine to increase output. This is a process that takes time. It takes investment. It takes time to build the pipelines and the infrastructure. It takes time to drill the wells and produce the oil and send it to the refineries to make into gasoline and jet fuel.

While industry is working to increase supply, Washington Democrats are looking for new ways to put an even tighter squeeze on domestic energy. You would have thought that the Russian invasion of Ukraine demonstrated the irresponsibility of not maintaining multiple accesses to energy. As a matter of fact, Mr. Putin had convinced most of Europe to depend solely on Russian supply, and then when that is no longer available or when he uses it as a weapon, they are looking around for alternatives. But they are not easy to come by. They take time, and they take some investment.

According to reports, we are hearing that our Democratic colleagues are considering a new tax that would require energy producers to pay hefty fees if they emit more methane than our Democratic colleagues would allow.

Natural gas accounts for about 40 percent of our electricity, double the amount of renewable resources. You know, we are having a hot spell in Texas. I know it is July. It is always hot in Texas in July, but we are having a particularly bad spell of 100-degree-plus days in my hometown of Austin, TX, and across the State. And one of the problems is that, for some reason, the wind that we depend on to produce electricity from wind turbines has died down during this hot period, so not only do you have the constraints on

natural gas and other sources of energy, but now even renewable sources like wind are not producing as much electricity as we need in order to maintain the grid, in order to maintain things like air-conditioning.

Hitting producers of natural gas with a methane fee and other proposed tax hikes isn't going to change the fact that we need natural gas to keep the lights on. We have seen emissions reduced by about 15 percent over recent years, primarily because the country has transitioned from coal to natural gas. You would think that would be something that we would celebrate, and certainly our energy supply continues to transition as we come up with new and different ways to satisfy our demand and our economy's need for affordable energy.

One change this tax that our Democratic colleagues are considering would have is on energy costs for American people. Electricity costs are already up 12 percent from last year, and with this new methane fee, they would certainly rise even more. So instead of policies that would reduce the pain at the pump and at the grocery store of sky-high prices, actually, our Democratic colleagues are considering policies that would make it worse.

I understand this proposal is still in the drafting phase, but it is an example of the sort of things that our colleagues are considering in their "Build Back Broke" reconciliation bill. Last go-around, the "Build Back Broke" included tax credits for rich people buying expensive electric vehicles. Now, most of my constituents in Texas can't afford an \$80,000 electric vehicle, but if you are a well-to-do person and you can pay that price, you will get a tax credit, courtesy of Uncle Sam and the Federal Government and our Democratic colleagues. But you won't get it if you are buying a used car on a parking lot because you need to take your kids to school or you need to be able to drive to work.

Our colleagues also propose to provide billions of dollars in taxpayer-funded rebates and grants to cover the cost of retrofitting private homes—not public buildings but private homes.

While the climate policies would be sure to hurt working families, another piece of this proposal would give the richest Americans another cause to celebrate. The so-called millionaire tax break has been scrapped and revived many times over the past few years. It is extremely unpopular among working families for a very simple reason: It allows millionaires and billionaires in blue States to pay less Federal taxes. It is a tax cut for millionaires and billionaires. That is the proposal.

When our colleagues tried to include this provision in their most recent partisan spending attempt, the price for this tax cut for millionaires and billionaires was \$285 billion. That is quite a tax cut for the wealthiest people in America.

According to the liberal Tax Policy Center, 93 percent of those making a

million dollars or more would receive a tax break averaging about \$48,000—a \$48,000 tax cut for people making a million dollars or more or at least 93 percent of them.

So this isn't an attempt to support those who are struggling to make ends meet or to bring down high prices that are wiping out family budgets; it is a get-out-of-jail-free card for the wealthiest people in America who don't want to pay their fair share of taxes.

Under this proposal, two-thirds of those making more than a million dollars would receive a tax cut next year. Nearly 90 percent of those earning between \$500,000 and a million dollars would receive a tax cut. These aren't the families who have been forced to buy just a few bucks' worth of gasoline because they can't afford to fill up their car or remove items from their shopping list because they simply find them to be too expensive or have to make conscious choices for cheaper items at the grocery store in order to feed their family to deal with inflation. We are talking about not making their life better but making life maybe a little bit better for the wealthiest of Americans.

If this proposal were enacted, about 70 percent of the benefit would go to the top 5 percent of earners; that is, people making \$366,000 a year—roughly six times the median income in Texas.

The millionaires who stand to gain the most from this change are those who live in blue States like New York or California that have higher State and local taxes. They would get to deduct up to \$80,000 of their State and local taxes and send the bill to the American taxpayer.

Working families in Texas should not be forced to subsidize the tax bill for Manhattan millionaires. Inflation is already pummeling folks in Texas. The last thing we need to do is to send more tax breaks to the wealthiest of Americans, who are not hurting at this time when the vast majority of Americans are hurting.

Well, I guess it shouldn't be a surprise when the majority leader of the Senate is from New York and the Speaker of the House is from California, two of the highest taxing States at the State and local level. And I understand they are hearing from their constituents saying: We want our old tax break back that we lost in 2017. But you shouldn't prioritize tax breaks for the wealthiest of your constituents over dealing with the rising costs of working families.

This proposal won't ease the burden that Americans are facing or help our country build back better; it will ensure that we never reach the prepandemic economy that was the envy of the world. No PR blitz or no spin doctoring can hide the truth about this reckless tax-and-spending spree proposal that apparently the majority leader is considering. It wraps ill-conceived tax plans, irresponsible spending, and hurtful energy policies into another partisan exercise.

And let's get this straight. No Republican is going to vote for this. So if, in fact, our Democratic colleagues can pass it—and they can if all 50 Senators on the Democratic side and the Vice President vote for it—it will be they who own it and who will be accountable to the American people in the upcoming midterm elections. But it is fair to ask where have these policies gotten us so far.

While the administration has kept its foot on the neck of domestic energy policy while the President is making, apparently, a trip to Saudi Arabia to talk to Muhammad bin Salman about increasing Saudi production of oil—not here in America, which would create jobs, which would create more supply, arguably bring down price at the pump—he is going hat in hand to a foreign leader in a nondemocratic country and saying: Will you please open the spigot just a little bit more?

I think it is embarrassing.

We have also seen our Democratic colleagues spend nearly \$2 trillion on a party-line vote earlier this year that helped ignite inflation to its current 40-year high levels. This new tax-and-spending spree—or, I should say, the old tax-and-spending spree bill which is now being repackaged and presumably resold—won't be any different from the earlier one.

So it isn't time to hand out tax breaks to the well-off or push our country toward unrealistic energy goals at a time of more demand and not enough supply. We need more domestic energy supplies. That would provide relief for working families and a shot at waking up from the economic nightmare that we find ourselves in.

So this reconciliation bill—this “Build Back Broke” bill that is apparently being contemplated by our Democratic colleagues—is not the solution. It is making the problem worse.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PADILLA). The Senator from New Hampshire.

NATO SUMMIT

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, I am really pleased to be able to come to the floor this morning to join my colleagues Senator TILLIS, from North Carolina; Senator ERNST, from Iowa; Senator BLUNT, from Missouri—and we are hoping to be joined by Senator COONS, from Delaware—to talk about the very successful congressional delegation we took in the first week of the 2-week break to Finland, Sweden, and the NATO summit in Madrid.

I want to especially acknowledge my coleader for that delegation, Senator TILLIS. He and I cochaired the Senate NATO Observer Group. And we have both been fervent supporters of NATO and efforts to ensure that the United States continues to be a leader on the world stage and a champion for freedom.

We were also joined on that trip by Senator DURBIN, from Illinois, and Senator FISCHER, from Nebraska.

A couple of months ago, Majority Leader SCHUMER and Minority Leader

McCONNELL asked Senator TILLIS and I to lead that bipartisan delegation to the NATO summit in Madrid to convey the Senate's strong bipartisan support for the alliance, especially amid Putin's unprovoked war in Ukraine.

I was very honored to represent the Senate amid what has been one of the most consequential moments in the history of the transatlantic alliance. And I think probably Senator TILLIS and everyone who was part of that delegation felt the same way.

Our visit to Sweden, Finland, and Spain affirmed three important points: first, the NATO alliance is stronger than ever before—and this year's historic summit reaffirmed that; second, the Strategic Concept that was approved at this year's summit will ensure that NATO is prepared to address immediate threats on all fronts, from Putin's attempts to threaten the sovereignty of our allies to China's challenges to our alliance.

And, finally, as Putin attempts to rewrite history, working with our allies and partners is critical to ensuring that Putin or any leader that attempts to follow in his path is met with the might of NATO's democratic resolve.

One of the other things that I was very impressed with as we met not just with some of our NATO allies but with NATO aspirant country delegations and talked to leaders from the Indo-Pacific who were in Madrid is how everybody we talked to reaffirmed the importance of America's leadership in the world. So I think as we think about the future of NATO, about what we need to do in the United States, it is important to remember just how important our role is.

Now, our trip coincided with Turkey's announcement to support Finland and Sweden's ambitions to join NATO, which will significantly strengthen the alliance. In fact, as we landed in Madrid, we got the news that Turkey had dropped its hold on those applications. So we were able to celebrate.

Sweden and Finland's accession into NATO sends an unmistakable message to Putin: The alliance is stronger than ever and Russia does not have veto power over who joins NATO.

Our delegation was pleased to meet with the leadership from both Sweden and Finland to reaffirm the bipartisan support in the Senate for the swift approval of their NATO applications.

Our delegation's bipartisan message of support for Ukraine and NATO was reciprocated by our allies, which was evident during the meetings that we had with Japan and Germany. We met with Ukrainian officials and underscored our strong support to not only help Ukraine defend itself but to help Ukraine win. And that is what we heard from all of the allies we met with.

It is critical that, as Members of the Senate, we continue to do all we can to coordinate with our allies and support Ukraine's heroic efforts to defend itself

against Putin's aggression because that war is not just against the people of Ukraine; it is an attack on democracies around the world, an attack on our shared transatlantic values—values that have maintained peace for over 70 years.

Our bipartisan delegation made clear that the United States will continue to support peace and stability in Europe and around the world. We will defend every inch of NATO territory and continue to look for ways to bolster Ukraine's defense.

We were pleased to share this commitment with members of the Biden administration who also traveled to the NATO summit. Our delegation met with President Biden, with Secretary Austin, and Secretary Blinken and reaffirmed that the Senate will continue to look for ways to help defend Ukraine and respond to emerging threats from the Balkans to the Indo-Pacific.

Again, I want to thank all of those who went on this very important trip, especially the staff who did such a great job putting it together. I was proud to colead that delegation, which was centered on our bipartisan resolve to support a strong and unified NATO and stand by our Ukrainian partners.

As Putin's war threatens democracies around the world, I think it is important that we send a clear message to our constituents at home and our allies abroad that the United States remains resolute in our commitment to the stability and freedom of all democratic nations because if Putin succeeds in Ukraine, there is no telling where his belligerence will end.

Last night, Senator DURBIN secured unanimous consent for the protocols to the North Atlantic Treaty on the accession of Sweden and Finland to be referred to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. This is an important development as we look at ratifying those protocols. I hope we can get this done as quickly as possible. I hope the Foreign Relations Committee will move on that process and we can act here in the Senate Chamber because swift ratification is in our national security interest.

Again, I am pleased to join my colleagues here on the floor and would like to turn it over to Senator TILLIS to get his impressions from the trip.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from North Carolina.

Mr. TILLIS. Mr. President, I want to thank Senator SHAHEEN and my colleagues on the floor here—Senators COONS, ERNST, BLUNT, and the others who joined the bipartisan delegation at the NATO summit. It was an extraordinary opportunity to see firsthand how the democratic world looks at the United States for leadership.

It was an extraordinary opportunity to talk about Russia's aspirations. It was an extraordinary opportunity to talk about what I think may go down as the greatest miscalculation in this century on the part of Vladimir Putin.

Months ago, when he was massing troops at the Ukrainian border, he

called it a special military operation, a training exercise, for a little while. What he was thinking in the back of his head was that now was the time to test NATO's resolve; now was the time to see if the differences that we have was enough to break an alliance.

What he found out was quite the opposite. Shortly after February 24, the NATO countries came together, the EU came together. We implemented sanctions. We provided troops on the ground to assist with the evacuation of Ukrainian refugees.

And now we are in a position of providing support for the very courageous members of the Ukrainian military.

What else did he get for his miscalculation? Two nations that, for decades, have been nonaligned, Sweden and Finland. Eight hundred and thirty miles of Russian border is now about to be the back door or the front yard of NATO. And when Finland and Sweden ultimately get membership in NATO, which I expect to be in weeks or months, then Vladimir Putin needs to understand his reward for invading a sovereign nation is 830 miles of NATO borders right next door.

Now I want to talk a little bit about Finland and Sweden. They are extraordinary countries—advanced democracies, the rule of law, a great defense industrial base in Sweden, home to Saab. They manufacture jet fighters that are NATO interoperable.

Finland is already spending in the 2-percent threshold for NATO and wanting to go further. Finland has 64 joint strike fighters on order. If the United States was going to have as many—they are a nation of about 5½ million people—if the United States was going to have as many F-35s as Finland on a per capita basis, we would need thousands of them. We have less than 200. They are committed to defense. They are a strong army, a strong ground force. Russia knows that; just look back to 1939.

And then in Sweden, we have a defense industrial base and a Navy that covers the Arctic. It covers the Baltics. They are going to be net distributors of security the day that they get NATO membership.

I had somebody a couple of weeks ago—from time to time, I go to the front office, and I take calls from constituents. I had someone call up and say, Why are you supporting—why are you focused on Ukraine? Why are you focused on Finland and Sweden when we have so many things we need to do back here at home?

I said, We have to do both because the future of our safety and our freedom at home is intrinsically linked to the safety and security of Europe.

This weekend, I was moving some furniture around. I came across a globe I have had for 40 years. It has a picture of the Soviet Empire on it. Vladimir Putin wants to recreate that and expand it. This doesn't end. And I told the caller this: It doesn't end in Ukraine. It is one step of several chess

moves that Vladimir Putin would like to play out and, ultimately, dominate the free world. We can't let that happen.

When we were at the NATO summit, I think it was very clear—at least to me—that those whom we met with, the heads of state, feel like now more than ever is the time America has to lead, that America has to understand the threats that exist: a rising China, a threatening Russia, a malign group of leaders in Iran. Now is the time for us to look outward and preserve the free world.

How do we do that? We make NATO stronger. We admit Sweden. We admit Finland. And we continue to work together to recognize emerging threats in the Pacific Rim.

I think at the end of the day, to the American citizen who is wondering why do we worry about NATO, why do we worry about Ukraine? Because it is directly linked to the future of our sovereignty and our safety here at home.

I want to thank the President for his contribution at NATO, as well. We met with him for about an hour last week. We had a press conference a little later in the day, and people wanted to ask us about domestic policies. I said, We are a bipartisan group here to talk about our commitment to NATO and our commitment to having Putin fail in Ukraine. We can have our differences back home, but there is no daylight between the Republicans and the Democrats who were on that codel with respect to the future of our commitment to NATO and a future to our commitment to the free world.

I hope that we will move swiftly to pass the treaty, to be one of the first to recognize that we want and welcome Sweden and Finland into the NATO alliance. And then we need to continue to remind people at home why it is important. Although it is not in our backyard, it is in a part of the world that if we let this stand, if we don't act with unity, then we will live to regret it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. I rise to join the leaders of the codel that I just had the honor and blessing of joining, Senators SHAHEEN and TILLIS, and a number of the other members of that codel, Senators ERNST and BLUNT. And I was grateful for the chance to travel with Senators DURBIN and FISCHER. I want to just join in my colleagues' statements today.

I think this was a tremendous opportunity for us in Sweden and in Finland to meet with nations that are advanced economies, that are closely aligned with our values, that have sophisticated militaries, and that now, for the very first time, are seeking admission to NATO. NATO is the most successful security alliance in world history, and it is rooted in shared values and shared concerns and interests.

One of the most vulnerable pieces of NATO, if you looked at the map just a few months ago, were three little Baltic States—Latvia, Lithuania, and Es-

tonia—that, for decades, were under the heel of the Soviet Union. They were relatively newly independent in recent decades, admitted to NATO, but very difficult to defend.

One of the reasons I joined with my colleagues to say here, as we did in Madrid, that we should swiftly ratify the joining to NATO of both Sweden and Finland is that they will provide security. They will be security contributors to this alliance. The odds that a young man or a woman from Iowa or North Carolina, from Missouri, New Hampshire, or Delaware will have to go defend Estonia, will have to go risk or give their life to defending Latvia or Lithuania will go down dramatically if we have on that border, at the very northern end of the NATO alliance, a new 830-mile border between Finland and Russia. The Russians know they will have to defend and pay attention to it given the unique history of 1939–1940 war. And where countries aligned with our values and priorities are going to continue to contribute to the importance of this alliance.

It was valuable that in our meetings with heads of state from Europe, like Chancellor Scholz from the Indo-Pacific, like Prime Minister Kishida from Japan, in conversations with foreign Secretaries like Liz Truss of the United Kingdom, or meetings with foreign Ministers of Italy and of Germany and of France and of Spain, that this delegation was able to speak with one voice and to articulate why we join the Biden administration in supporting NATO accession for these two critical new partners.

The last point I want to make is that I am hopeful—I am optimistic—that we will continue to provide unified bipartisan robust support for Ukraine's brave and fierce defense of its Nation and its sovereignty in the face of Russia's war crimes, Russia's continued aggression. We are calling on all of our NATO allies to step up and to contribute and to participate. And they are. This has brought greater unity, greater purpose, greater focus to the NATO alliance than anything in decades.

I will remind you, the one time that the article 5 sacred obligation to come to each other's defense has been triggered before was in Afghanistan. Thousands and thousands of NATO soldiers served alongside ours in Afghanistan when it was the United States that was attacked on 9/11. This NATO alliance is stronger than it has ever been and needs to be the strongest it has ever been, because, as my colleagues both laid out clearly and concisely, this is a pivotal moment in the future of the United States and our role in the world, the future of NATO and Western freedom.

We must make sure we succeed. I am so grateful for the bipartisan commitment that was at the core of this delegation.

I yield to my colleague.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Iowa.

Ms. ERNST. Mr. President, I want to thank my colleagues, especially Senators SHAHEEN and TILLIS, for leading an incredibly successful congressional delegation to the NATO summit. I want to thank them, as well, for organizing the colloquy today.

I join them in enthusiastically endorsing Finland and Sweden's accession into NATO. Both nations have representative governments accountable to their people. They conduct extensive commerce and trade with our great United States, and, broadly, they share many of our values.

Historically, perhaps these were conditions sufficient to readily welcome two European nations into one of our multinational security frameworks, but today, given the increasingly complex threats our adversaries are imposing on the homeland, protecting American security and prosperity demands partners who are capable of sharing NATO's manpower and resource burdens.

NATO isn't a club of democracies or a playground for exploring climate change or progressive cultural interests. It is a military alliance that is assembled to deter our adversaries from wreaking havoc on our partners and against our own homeland.

Today, the United States is the unquestioned and undisputed leader of not just NATO, but continues to lead the global coalition containing and destroying terrorist operations in the Middle East and in Africa. Beyond Europe and the Middle East, the United States must—and I will repeat that—must lead a coalition to deter China's looming imperial expansion around the world and potential takeover of Taiwan and our other partners in the Indo-Pacific.

The United States has the greatest military on the face of the planet, and the American people's support of our Armed Forces is unwavering.

Still, our Commander in Chief, our diplomatic and military leadership, and Members of the Senate must hold our partners accountable to their own defense and not lean on the reach and lethality of our soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines, and guardians alone.

Going forward, NATO member countries must invest in their own defense. Two percent must be a minimum standard. Longstanding members of the alliance remain far too lax and sometimes neglectful of their obligations to the alliance and to their people. America is not the world's policemen, but we are the leader of the free world and this alliance. And Finland and Sweden are on target regarding their 2-percent commitment.

I am confident that Finland and Sweden are ready to stand up and help shoulder the resource burden on NATO's military obligations in Europe, particularly following Russia's bloody, lawless invasion of Ukraine.

The accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO is a great success, but regarding the war raging in Ukraine today,

on day 140 of this conflict, the U.S. cannot grow weary. Our resolve to support our partner must carry on. China is watching. The Gulf States, South America, and Africa are weighing their commitment to the free world against the economic and security guarantees on the table from our adversaries.

Our national defense capacity diminishes the more our adversaries, from the Taliban to Iran's cluster of violent extremist organizations, to Vladimir Putin, to the Chinese Communist Party, can call our bluff and see if we cannot bear the cost of achieving our goals.

We must remain steady and strong. This administration and our partners in NATO must change their strategy to deliver Ukraine victory over Putin's Russia, and that is why Sweden and Finland will be a much welcomed addition to NATO.

Again, I thank my colleagues for organizing this colloquy, and I urge this body to move very quickly to confirm the U.S. support of Finland and Sweden's accession to NATO.

I yield the floor to my colleague from Missouri.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I know we have a vote coming up. I have brief remarks, and I ask unanimous consent to complete them before the vote starts.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BLUNT. Mr. President, I want to join with my five colleagues who have been here today and the two people who were with us, Senator DURBIN and Senator FISCHER.

I would say one of the great things about this effort was the unanimous feeling that all seven of us had about both what is happening in NATO and our commitment to win in Ukraine. We were able to demonstrate that to every group we met with from every country we met with. I think with the strong leadership of Chairmen SHAHEEN and TILLIS that it made an impression on where we were and the unity we have on this.

It would be interesting to know if Putin was more surprised by the Ukrainian resistance, the poor performance of his own military, or my guess would be he may have been most surprised by what has happened at NATO—the great turnaround of the NATO—the current NATO countries and their commitment to NATO, their commitment to what they have been willing to do and pledged to do with NATO and then to see these two incredibly important security contributors join NATO after 73 years of being neutral and an important part of the world and saw that as part of their long-term commitment.

But both Finland and Sweden, which, by the way, have been NATO contributors for some time now in terms of being willing to be part of NATO missions, training with their future NATO

allies—all that is incredibly important, but these countries not only bring incredible security contributions to NATO, they also bring significant geographic contributions to NATO. When you look at a map, suddenly not just Norway, which has been in NATO, but Sweden and Finland in NATO has an incredible impact on the ability of what happens in the Baltic. That is important to us as we look to the future.

Now, with the exception of Russia, every country that borders and has part of a claim on the Arctic will be a NATO country. This is a part of the world we have been talking about much more the last 5 years than we did the previous 25 years. To have this NATO unity as we look at the Arctic is an important thing.

The 800-mile border that Finland has shared for years and defended for years against Russia doubles the NATO border in Europe.

The intimate understanding that both Sweden and Finland have of Russia brings a different point of view and a helpful point of view to NATO.

For the current members, particularly the new members of NATO, when you look at these Baltic countries of Estonia and Latvia and Lithuania and then look at Poland and Romania, seeing what happens when the unity is created and the force multiplier is there—I have heard my colleagues already talk about the jet planes, the submarines, the navy, the air force that both of these people bring, the cyber ability that both of them bring to the fight is real.

You know, in a meeting that I was in before this meeting occurred with the Latvian Defense Minister, the Latvian Defense Minister, one of the newest members of NATO, one of the most vulnerable members of NATO as we have looked at NATO for some time, said: We don't want to be rescued by NATO; we want to be defended by NATO.

I think today, as we see the growth of NATO, we see a NATO that is willing to do its job defending its members in this most successful alliance of all time. There has never been anything like it. President Truman was the leader in putting this together in 1949. Here we are 73 years later. In my view, NATO not only has its largest group of members but also its most powerful and committed group of members in the history of this alliance.

I look forward to being on the Senate floor when the Senate does its job to welcome Sweden and Finland to NATO, and I am pleased that process has started.

I yield the floor.

VOTE ON VAZIRANI NOMINATION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Vazirani nomination?

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is sufficient second.
The clerk will call the roll.
The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

The result was announced—yeas 73, nays 21, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 244 Ex.]

YEAS—73

Baldwin	Grassley	Reed
Barrasso	Hassan	Romney
Bennet	Heinrich	Rosen
Blunt	Hickenlooper	Rounds
Booker	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Hyde-Smith	Schatz
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cantwell	Kaine	Shaheen
Capito	Kelly	Sinema
Cardin	King	Smith
Carper	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Casey	Lummis	Sullivan
Cassidy	Manchin	Tester
Collins	Markey	Tillis
Coons	McConnell	Toomey
Cornyn	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Cramer	Moran	Warnock
Crapo	Murkowski	Warren
Duckworth	Murphy	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murray	Wicker
Feinstein	Ossoff	Wyden
Fischer	Padilla	Young
Gillibrand	Peters	
Graham	Portman	

NAYS—21

Blackburn	Hagerty	Marshall
Boozman	Hawley	Paul
Braun	Hoeven	Rubio
Cotton	Johnson	Scott (FL)
Cruz	Kennedy	Shelby
Daines	Lankford	Thune
Ernst	Lee	Tuberville

NOT VOTING—6

Blumenthal	Luján	Sasse
Leahy	Risch	Schumer

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 1037, Steven M. Dettelbach, of Ohio, to be Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Ben Ray Luján, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Tina Smith, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher A. Coons, Alex Padilla,

Chris Van Hollen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Elizabeth Warren, Jeff Merkley, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tim Kaine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Steven M. Dettelbach, of Ohio, to be Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 48, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 245 Ex.]

YEAS—48

Baldwin	Heinrich	Portman
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schatz
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Feinstein	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Capito	Inhofe	Shelby
Cassidy	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Kennedy	Thune
Cotton	Lankford	Tillis
Cramer	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—6

Blumenthal	Luján	Sasse
Leahy	Risch	Schumer

(Mr. Kaine assumed the Chair.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SINEMA). On this vote, the yeas are 48, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read the nomination of Steven M. Dettelbach, of Ohio, to be Director, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 1:09 p.m. recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SINEMA).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

NOMINATION OF STEVEN M. DETTELBACH

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, last week on the Fourth of July, a day meant to celebrate freedom and independence, we witnessed another act of senseless violence—this time, in the Chicago suburb of Highland Park.

Yet again, more Americans have been murdered while going about their daily lives—this time, attending an Independence Day parade.

Yet again, a community grieves. Yet again, we ask: How many times are we going to allow this to happen?

The bipartisan gun safety bill was important—long overdue progress, finally.

Today, we have the opportunity to keep up that work together and take another important step in protecting Americans from violent gun crimes by confirming a permanent ATF Director.

I urge my colleagues to support President Biden's nominee, Steve Dettelbach, from Cleveland, to be Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

There is no better person for this role than Steve Dettelbach, a son of Ohio, a career public servant, with the experience and the record to combat violent crime and keep Americans safe.

As U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, Steve worked with law enforcement, including ATF, to prosecute tough cases.

I have known Steve Dettelbach for years. I have watched him tackle some of the Department of Justice's most sensitive cases—cases at the intersection of law enforcement and civil rights.

He prosecuted a White supremacist who tried to burn down First Azusa Apostolic Faith Church, a predominantly Black church in my wife's home county of Ashtabula, in a community called Conneaut, OH. Steve not only prosecuted the man responsible, he helped create a clergy group, United Against Hate.

When he prosecuted the firebombing of the largest mosque in Northwest Ohio, Steve, a practicing Jew, attended worship services there as a show of solidarity. He has lived the value of religious freedom. He has consistently stood up against extremism and hate.

Steve Dettelbach understands that politics must play no role in running the ATF. His experience, his record bear that out. That is why he has broad support from across the ideological spectrum, including prosecutors, including law enforcement officials who understand what it takes to do this job.

This includes law enforcement groups like NOBLE, the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association; Women in Federal Law Enforcement; the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the Major County Sheriffs' Association; the National Sheriffs' Association.

It includes more than 140 former Federal prosecutors, 8 former ATF Directors, the Federal Law Enforcement Officers Association, the association representing the men and women of the ATF.

He has the support of civil rights organizations—the National Urban League, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and faith organizations like the Jewish Federation of North America.

They understand that Steve is the right person to lead this vital law enforcement Agency.

Following the horrific shooting in Highland Park, local law enforcement was able to capture the murderer so quickly because of the help provided by the heroes—the men and women of the ATF.

Yet there are some out there who not only don't want an ATF Director, for whatever reason, they may oppose Steve Dettelbach. That is not even it. They want to abolish the ATF entirely. That is one stupid idea.

You know who thinks that it is a terrible idea? Every single law enforcement officer who has to combat gun crimes on a daily basis. They know how important the ATF is, even though some fringe politicians and just some fringe, conspiracy-minded characters think the ATF should be abolished.

Abolishing the ATF, these law enforcement officers argue, rightly—abolishing the ATF would make our communities less safe.

In their letter endorsing Mr. Dettelbach, the National Sheriffs' Association said that he would work to bring "people together by working closely with state and local law enforcement to ensure that resources are adequately allocated to combat violent crime."

The sheriffs went on to write they appreciated Steve's "goal of being a value-add to local law enforcement by not only adding resources to urban areas, but rural as well."

Rural crime and rural terrorism and rural—abuses like that are just as likely in rural areas as cities.

Mr. Dettelbach has emphasized the importance of "boots on the ground" task forces and pledged to provide forensic help to local law enforcement at crime scenes.

Sadly, our local law enforcement personnel need this help. Fortunately, the ATF, with Steve Dettelbach, I hope, confirmed and soon at the helm, will be there to provide that help.

I can think of no better way to support law enforcement, to reject hate, to keep Americans safe from violent

crime than for the Senate to confirm Steve Dettelbach ATF Director.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting his confirmation.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, today, the Senate will vote on Steve Dettelbach's nomination to lead the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives—better known as ATF.

As I said on the floor yesterday, after describing in horrifying detail the mass shooting in Highland Park on the Fourth of July, we need a confirmed ATF Director now more than ever.

When a mass shooter tears apart a community like Highland Park, IL—or Buffalo, NY—ATF agents are among the first to arrive on scene. In fact, in the hours following the attack in Highland Park, it was ATF agents who traced the firearm belonging to the confessed shooter. Their investigate work was described by local authorities in Lake County as "phenomenal." I couldn't agree more.

The least we can do to support these heroic agents is confirm a proven leader to head the ATF, which has gone 7 years without a Senate-confirmed Director.

Our country and our communities deserve better. They deserve an ATF that is fully equipped to respond on our Nation's darkest days—and to enforce the laws on the books to prevent these tragedies in the first place.

And Steve Dettelbach is exactly the right leader for this challenge. He is a career prosecutor with decades of experience fighting crime, religion-motivated violence, gun trafficking, and he is a proven consensus-builder with bipartisan support.

The vote on Mr. Dettelbach's nomination is not about a new policy or regulation; it is about enforcing the laws that already exist, and respecting the men and women of ATF who deserve Senate-confirmed leadership. This vote is a pragmatic step all of us can take toward making our communities safer.

Guns are now the leading cause of death for American children. And we have more than one mass shooting per day in America. In the wake of Highland Park, Uvalde, Buffalo, and too many tragedies across America, it is clear that we need experienced and dedicated law enforcement leadership in agencies like ATF. I hope my colleagues will join me in supporting Mr. Dettelbach.

VOTE ON DETTELBACH NOMINATION

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the scheduled vote occur immediately.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

All postcloture time is expired.

The question is, Will the Senate advise and consent to the Dettelbach nomination?

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

The result was announced—yeas 48, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 246 Ex.]

YEAS—48

Baldwin	Heinrich	Portman
Bennet	Hickenlooper	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Rosen
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Cantwell	Kelly	Schatz
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Manchin	Smith
Collins	Markey	Stabenow
Coons	Menendez	Tester
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Van Hollen
Duckworth	Murphy	Warner
Durbin	Murray	Warnock
Feinstein	Ossoff	Warren
Gillibrand	Padilla	Whitehouse
Hassan	Peters	Wyden

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Graham	Paul
Blackburn	Grassley	Romney
Blunt	Hagerty	Rounds
Boozman	Hawley	Rubio
Braun	Hoeven	Scott (FL)
Burr	Hyde-Smith	Scott (SC)
Capito	Inhofe	Shelby
Cassidy	Johnson	Sullivan
Cornyn	Kennedy	Thune
Cotton	Lankford	Tillis
Cramer	Lee	Toomey
Crapo	Lummis	Tuberville
Cruz	Marshall	Wicker
Daines	McConnell	Young
Ernst	Moran	
Fischer	Murkowski	

NOT VOTING—6

Blumenthal	Luján	Sasse
Leahy	Risch	Schumer

The nomination was confirmed.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the motion to reconsider is considered made and laid upon the table, and the President will be immediately notified of the Senate's actions.

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The bill clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE MOTION

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on the nomination of Executive Calendar No. 975, Michael S. Barr, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2018.

Charles E. Schumer, Richard J. Durbin, Ben Ray Luján, Jack Reed, Jacky Rosen, Tina Smith, Angus S. King, Jr., Patrick J. Leahy, Robert P. Casey, Jr., Christopher A. Coons, Alex Padilla, Chris Van Hollen, Margaret Wood Hassan, Elizabeth Warren, Jeff Merkley, Catherine Cortez Masto, Tim Kaine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on the nomination of Michael S. Barr, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2018, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY), the Senator from New Mexico (Mr. LUJÁN), and the Senator from New York (Mr. SCHUMER) are necessarily absent.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN), the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH), and the Senator from Nebraska (Mr. SASSE).

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 66, nays 27, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 247 Ex.]

YEAS—66

Baldwin	Grassley	Portman
Barrasso	Hassan	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Romney
Blunt	Hickenlooper	Rosen
Booker	Hirono	Rounds
Brown	Inhofe	Sanders
Cantwell	Kaine	Schatz
Capito	Kelly	Scott (SC)
Cardin	King	Shaheen
Carper	Klobuchar	Sinema
Casey	Lummis	Smith
Cassidy	Manchin	Stabenow
Collins	Markey	Tester
Coons	McConnell	Toomey
Cornyn	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murkowski	Warnock
Durbin	Murphy	Warren
Ernst	Murray	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Ossoff	Wicker
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Graham	Peters	Young

NAYS—27

Blackburn	Fischer	Marshall
Boozman	Hagerty	Paul
Braun	Hawley	Rubio
Burr	Hoeben	Scott (FL)
Cotton	Hyde-Smith	Shelby
Cramer	Johnson	Sullivan
Crapo	Kennedy	Thune
Cruz	Lankford	Tillis
Daines	Lee	Tuberville

NOT VOTING—7

Blumenthal	Moran	Schumer
Leahy	Risch	
Luján	Sasse	

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BOOKER). The yeas are 66, the nays are 27.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Michael S. Barr, of Michigan, to be a Member of the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System for the unexpired term of fourteen years from February 1, 2018.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Virginia.

RECOGNIZING LONDON BUSINESS SCHOOL GRADUATES

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, I want to thank my friend the Senator from Iowa for giving me a moment of personal privilege.

I also want to acknowledge our colleague who has been the Presiding Officer. I want to acknowledge our colleague who was presiding prior to you coming to the chair and acknowledge that it is her birthday today, a great day of celebration across Arizona and elsewhere.

Mr. President, I will only rise for a moment, and I appreciate my friend the senior Senator from Illinois being here for this. I want to acknowledge my youngest daughter, Eliza, and her fellow classmates from the London Business School—not LSE; the London Business School—where, last Wednesday, I attended their graduation. My hope is that every one of these young men and women who are going to be from across the world—the United States, the UK, Nigeria, Lebanon, Israel, India, Singapore, and a host of other countries—one, I wish them all well. I know they are going to contribute to economies and growth around the world.

I also believe that almost all of them now are going to go off their family's payroll at this moment in time after they have received this great, distinguished MBA they received from the London Business School.

I do appreciate, again, my friend the Senator from Iowa giving me the courtesy of this quick acknowledgement and recognition.

With that, I yield the floor and yield to my friend the senior Senator from Iowa.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Iowa.

WHISTLEBLOWERS

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I am back to the floor for reasons that my Senator friends are tired of hearing me talk about all the time, but I have come back to give you a specific example of retaliation against whistleblowers, Agencies of the government not answering letters that we have sent, and also what I believe is some political interference in some of my oversight work. Today, it deals specifically with the Department of Veterans Affairs—as we know it around here, the VA.

On April 2 of last year, 2021, I sent letters to the VA and the VA Office of Inspector General based on allegations from multiple whistleblowers. Those whistleblowers reported numerous ethical violations, retaliation, and possible leaking of market-sensitive information that may have affected retail investors. I have been waiting more than a year for a response to my inquiries.

Emails obtained through the Freedom of Information Act by a government watchdog group called Empower Oversight show that career public servants at the VA prepared a response to

my letter over a year ago, but when it came time for the Secretary of the VA, McDonough, to send that letter to my office, senior Biden political officials blocked it. It appears that Biden-appointed VA officials have issued an order not to respond to my request, and I have a pretty good reason why.

We know that the VA received these allegations from whistleblowers early on, and the VA ignored them. Whistleblowers alleged, among other things, conflicts of interest between a senior-level VA official and a company represented by her husband. This official, Charmain Bogue, has since left public service. The company that employed her husband, Barrett Bogue, is entitled “Veterans Education Success,” or VES.

On multiple occasions, starting in December of 2017, an employee at VA sought guidance from VA lawyers on whether Ms. Bogue should recuse herself on procurement-related matters. The lawyers affirmed that Ms. Bogue should recuse herself, and the employee even copied Ms. Bogue on that guidance of recusal. The employee also alerted VA leadership of Ms. Bogue's need to recuse herself. Ms. Bogue never recused herself, but the VA employee was reportedly removed from Federal service. Now, that is retaliation. That is unjustified. It should never happen.

In response to my letter about these and other allegations, the VA Office of Inspector General immediately opened an investigation. The VA Office of Inspector General uncovered more wrongdoing than originally thought, and I have four points that they uncovered. I am only going to go into those four.

Ms. Bogue participated in matters involving her husband's employer, contrary to ethics guidance. Ms. Bogue's interaction with that company violated the apparent conflict rules. Ms. Bogue did not provide sufficient detail to VA ethics about her spouse's business. No. 4, Ms. Bogue refused to cooperate fully in the OIG's investigation.

These are only some of the allegations that I have received.

The VA Office of Inspector General did not review the allegations of whistleblower reprisal; nor did it investigate whether VA employees mishandled nonpublic information.

I raised questions about all of these issues, and to date, I have had no substantive communication from Secretary McDonough about any of these questions I have raised. So what is the VA hiding? What else did the VA know or choose to ignore?

Congress needs answers not stonewalling. Independent government watchdogs and whistleblower advocates have called on the VA to review government grants and screen for companies and individuals who have engaged in wrongdoing. They have also urged the VA to consider whether those individuals or entities should be able to obtain government contracts in the future.

I would be very interested to know whether those who refuse to cooperate with an OIG request can still obtain taxpayer money through government contracts. The Biden administration has claimed, time and again, that it is the most transparent administration in U.S. history. Well, I think I just gave you an example that that is not true, and it certainly hasn't been true, in this case, for emphasis.

The VA deserves much better. Of course, the VA serves our veterans, and our veterans deserve much better from that Agency. The VA needs to start being as transparent as they claim to be transparent and cooperate with this investigation.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Wyoming.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I come to the floor today to talk about the economic crisis that the American people are living through, caused by Joe Biden.

The American people have just had the most expensive Fourth of July of all times. It is interesting what a difference a year and a half makes. Last July, 6 months into the Biden administration, the White House was insisting inflation was either nonexistent or transitory. The White House even bragged that the cost of a July 4 cookout last year had dropped 16 cents—not 16 percent but 16 cents—from the year before. Here we are, 1 year later, with 1 year of Democratic control, and the cost of that same cookout is up not just 16 cents but 16 percent. Hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad—across the board—everything is up. This July 4, the only way to save money was to stay home.

According to one survey, one out of every three Americans changed their summer travel plans for this summer because of high gas prices. People are driving less; they can't afford gas. They are shopping less; they can't afford the food, and they are getting a lot less from their paychecks.

The New York Times says people—I was astonished by this—are even using up vacation days so they don't have to drive in to work because they cannot afford the gas. They are using vacation days so they don't have to drive because they can't afford the gas. The average American family is now paying \$100 more each and every week just to buy the same things that they bought a year ago. So just to stay even is \$100 more a week this year than last. Week after week after week, in the Joe Biden economy, people can afford less and less and less. One study from the University of Michigan showed the Biden era had already seen the steepest drop in disposable income since Herbert Hoover.

Who could believe it?

The savings rate right now is the lowest since the great recession of 2009. Household debt is the highest ever. People are trying to borrow or spend

their savings just to keep up and to maintain the sorts of things they could afford easily last year. Consumer confidence in this country, right now, is at an alltime low. The concern, of course, is that the worst may yet be coming. More and more experts say we are headed toward a recession. A recession is when the economy shrinks for 6 months in a row.

Two weeks ago, the Commerce Department updated their estimate of economic growth for the first 3 months of the year, and the update said the economy had grown even less and had shrunk more than they had thought. The economy shrank more than the Biden Commerce Department admitted to in their first assessment, but there are already signs all around the country that the economy is shrinking. No wonder, in a national poll last week, only 1 in 10 Americans thinks the economy is heading in the right direction. Inflation plus a recession is called stagflation. I don't think we have had that since the days of Jimmy Carter, likely when the Presiding Officer was either a little boy or hadn't yet been born.

Democrats have run Washington for 17 full months now, and they are doing absolutely nothing here at home to bring down the pain at the pump or the pain at the grocery store.

Joe Biden says gas prices will remain high for “as long as it takes.” He says we just have to suffer through it, and he blames everything today on the war in Ukraine. He won't admit to the fact that the inflation crisis started 10 months before the war in Ukraine. Gas prices had already gone up by \$1.15 a gallon before Putin's invasion.

The American people get it. They remember all of this. It doesn't matter what Joe Biden happens to say. Of course, he is off to Saudi Arabia tomorrow, looking for more oil, when we have plenty of it in the United States. The American people clearly know who to blame for the inflation that is causing them pain every single day.

It is interesting to see that even Jimmy Carter's economists blame Joe Biden and the Democrats in Congress for the inflation that is hitting the country today.

Last week, the New York Times published an interview with Jimmy Carter's top economic advisers. They were asked what lessons they had learned from the miserable failures of the Carter administration. Jimmy Carter's Secretary of the Treasury, Michael Blumenthal, put the blame for today's inflation on the spending by Joe Biden and the Democrats. This is Jimmy Carter's Treasury Secretary pointing his finger at Joe Biden and the Democrats. Jimmy Carter's Treasury Secretary said that Democrats need to give up the gimmicks, turn off the money printer, and stop the reckless spending.

This is at a time when, behind closed doors, Senator SCHUMER and others are trying to come up with another gim-

mick to add more spending and higher taxes.

This article in the New York Times says:

Mr. Blumenthal urged Mr. Biden . . . to abandon his [Build Back Better bill]—

I call it “Build Back Biden.” He said he should abandon that—in favor of deficit reduction.

He said:

[F]ighting inflation comes first. . . . [B]y trying to take half measures . . . you merely prolong the pain.

The American people are tired of the pain that has been imposed upon them by Joe Biden and the Democrats in this body and across the floor.

Well, he is right. Jimmy Carter's Treasury Secretary is right. Fighting inflation needs to come first. Yet, for Joe Biden, fighting inflation has come last or not at all—denial that it even existed, dismissing it as “don't worry,” and continuing today to try to avoid the reality that he is facing.

You know, the Democrats in this body could learn something from the Carter administration. After all, Joe Biden has an even lower approval rating. It is hard to believe. I would have never believed, on the day Joe Biden was inaugurated, that by the Fourth of July weekend of 2022 that Joe Biden would have earned—fully earned—an approval rating lower than Jimmy Carter had. Remember, Jimmy Carter lost his reelection bid to Ronald Reagan.

So far, Democrats seem to have learned nothing. Last March, Republicans warned the Democrats that their spending and borrowing would cause inflation. Democrats ignored the warning.

Senator SCHUMER even said:

I do not think the dangers of inflation . . . in the near term are very real.

That may have been a New Yorker's view of it, but people around the country had a clear understanding that inflation was coming, and it did. It turned out Senator SCHUMER was wrong, and the dangers were very, very real for working families.

So the rich liberals in New York and the rich liberals in California who run the Democratic Party will be just fine. It is the working families who are trying to pay their bills every day—they are the ones who are paying the price for these reckless policies of the Democratic Party.

Democrats remain completely out of touch with American workers. It is obvious. Last March, all 50 Senate Democrats put an additional \$2 trillion on the national debt. The Biden inflation crisis started, and the fire of inflation started 1 month later.

Last week's New York Times article also quotes a Carter Treasury official who warned against socialist price controls with regard to energy. So what did the House Democrats just do? They just voted for socialist price controls. Now Senate Democrats seem to be eager to do the same thing.

Democrats are ignoring the warning signs once again. It seems they refuse

to learn the lessons of the Carter years. What have the Democrats learned in the last 18 months—anything? I don't think they have learned a thing, especially with regard to American energy. Joe Biden is continuing to restrict American energy, is continuing to give speeches against American energy, and then is going hat in hand to Venezuela, to Iran, and now, this week, to Saudi Arabia, saying: Please produce more energy.

This is the first time in 64 years that there will be no offshore energy lease sales this year—the first time in 64 years. Joe Biden is now considering blocking all offshore oil and gas leases for the next 5 years—no jobs for the people, no affordable energy for the folks and the families. No. He is just now lifting his blockade on onshore oil and gas leases that has been there since day 1 of his administration. Why is he doing it now? Well, he is doing it, kicking and screaming, because the Federal court forced his hand. After 17 months in office, when President Obama was there, they had held 40 lease sales. Joe Biden's energy strategy has now sunk us to a new low.

What is he doing now? What is the President's new approach? Because he wants to just belittle people in energy who make their livelihoods that way.

I mean, it is astonishing, the President of the United States tweeting about mom-and-pop gas stations in your neighborhood and mine. It is hard to believe, but it is true. Last week, the President of the United States tweeted a demand that gas stations bring down their prices. If only it were that easy.

You wonder, what does President Biden really understand about the way the world works and about the lives that people lead?

Prices aren't set by gas stations, and prices aren't set by Presidential tweets. They are set by supply and demand. It is economics 101. Gas stations aren't the problem. Gas stations would love to bring down prices overall. They can't do it. If demand is down because people can't afford to drive, that will lower the prices a bit. Today, the average is about \$4.65 a gallon. On the day Joe Biden came into office, it was \$2.38 a gallon. We are still at almost double the cost of a gallon of gas today, under Joe Biden and his policies, than we were the day he took office.

If you want to really lower prices at the pump and get to where we were on the day that Joe Biden came into office, we need more American energy. We have it. We have it here in the United States, and Joe Biden and the Democrats will not let us get it out of the ground.

So what are the Democrats in the Senate doing about these repeated failures by Joe Biden?

Well, right now, they are, once again, threatening another reckless tax-and-spending spree. They are planning a repeat of what got us into this inflation crisis in the first place. It is terrible

economics, and it is not even good politics. So just before the midterm elections, the Democrats are attempting to pass legislation that is going to make America's problems even worse.

They are proposing another reckless spending bill, and it is more reckless than the one last year because inflation is a lot higher now. Spending even more money is going to make today's prices go even higher.

According to media's report, the latest version of the Democrat bill includes more than \$100 billion in new taxes. Nobody knows exactly what is in it. We hear up to a trillion dollars in taxes. Many of these taxes are going to fall on American energy producers. If you have higher taxes on energy producers, who do you think is going to end up paying that? The people who have to use energy, who are the men and women going to work filling up their cars with gas, trying to take their kids to school, cutting back on vacations because they can't afford the gas.

The Secretary of the Treasury says, Well, you don't like the high price of gas? Buy an electric car.

Easy for him to say. Electric vehicle prices are up because of Joe Biden's inflation. They are 20 percent higher now than they were a year ago. How many Americans can go out and afford to buy one of these very expensive electric vehicles? Very few.

We are talking about a clueless administration, a clueless President, and a clueless Secretary of Transportation and Secretary of Energy who have promoted such policies.

Joe Biden should remember that in 2008, Senator Barack Obama said this:

[Y]ou don't raise taxes in a recession.

This is Senator Barack Obama in 2008, Presidential candidate Barack Obama in 2008:

[Y]ou don't raise taxes in a recession. The last thing you want to do is to raise taxes in a recession.

Yet that may be the party platform of the Democrats for this November.

The Democrats' attacks on American energy have been relentless. They are obsessed with stopping the use of fossil fuels, absolutely obsessed and worshipping at the altar of energy that is dependent on the weather. That is what they are proposing. The Democrats think that that is the winning sales pitch going into November.

Democrats I talk to privately admit that they expect to be stripped of power in November, NANCY PELOSI no longer Speaker of the House, her efforts to make sure that the Republicans are in the majority in the Senate. Democrats know the clock is running out on them, that they are not going to be able to do something like reconciliation to force down the throats of the American people, costly policies, tax increases, and regulations that the American people would never be in support of.

This is their last hope, their last Hail Mary pass to put into place policies of

the progressives that will help their group but hurt the country. It is absolutely wrong. It is one final try of the Democrats to increase spending, increase taxes, and, of course, increase the debt.

It doesn't seem the Democratic Party nationally or those on the Hill seem to care about that and the suffering of the American people who are living through the highest inflation in 40 years. The highest gas prices of all time until recently, massive debt, massive concerns, and incompetence—that is what the American people are looking at right now, and that is why, come November, what I believe, many, many Members, elected Democrats in the House and Senate, will be heading to the unemployment line.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Hawaii.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUESTS—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHATZ. Mr. President, I rise today in support of the nominations of Dr. Lester Martinez-Lopez to be the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs, Dr. Agnes Schaefer to be Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs, and Mr. Franklin Parker to hold the same position within the Navy.

The office Dr. Martinez-Lopez is nominated for is responsible for ensuring that we are medically ready to fight and win wars. This is a critical role for our national security at all times, but, of course, it is even more important during a pandemic.

Leaving this office without leadership jeopardizes our ability to respond to this health crisis and prepare for the next one. Having spent more than two decades as an Army surgeon and commander of medical centers at major U.S. military bases both stateside and overseas, and more than a decade as a leader of private medical research organizations, Dr. Martinez-Lopez clearly has the experience to fill this position.

The Assistant Secretaries for Manpower and Reserve Affairs across the branches ensure our military and civilian workforce have the education, the training, and the skills needed to meet current and future threats. Mr. Parker, who is nominated to head this office for the Navy, has demonstrated his ability to fill the role and will be able to hit the ground running, having held the position before.

Dr. Schaefer, nominated to head this office for the Army, will bring firsthand knowledge from her 15 years at the RAND Corporation, where she specialized in military personnel policy, reserve component issues, national security strategy, and emerging threats.

All three of these positions play important roles in our national security. All three nominees to fill them were voted out of committee—a committee on which the Senator from Missouri serves—without objection—without objection—4 months ago. But all three remain vacant.

The Senator from Missouri, as someone who serves on the Personnel Subcommittee of the Armed Services Committee, I know would know better than most the issues our military branches and the troops face. These include recruitment and retention challenges, ensuring safe workplaces, including implementing IRC reforms to prevent and respond to sexual assault and sexual harassment within the ranks, and addressing the high suicide rate among troops and veterans—all issues which impact military readiness. But there is a hold on all DOD nominees.

I am unaware of any substantive objections to these nominees based on their qualifications or their ability to serve, reasons which we have a constitutional duty to review based on our advice and consent role.

My understanding is that the Senator from Missouri is implementing a blanket hold based on general policy disagreements with the Biden administration. In addition to our advice and consent role, the Senate has oversight responsibilities, and that is a place where the Senator from Missouri, as a member of the Personnel Committee of the Armed Services Committee, has the responsibility of oversight of the three offices that we are discussing today. He has a way to ensure that once these three nominees are confirmed, he and his colleagues can evaluate their performance. With acting, nonconfirmed officials in these roles, that oversight authority is undermined.

As a Senator, we are afforded extraordinary powers to advance policies or even just to make a point, but these powers should be used in accordance with our constitutional responsibilities. The President of the United States has the responsibility to nominate qualified individuals to fill these roles, and he has. These individuals are qualified, and now we have the responsibility to confirm them so that they can get to work for our servicemembers and for the American people.

I will now yield to my friend and colleague Senator KAINE.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President, I rise and thank my colleague from Hawaii for stating plainly the qualifications of these candidates.

As a member of the Armed Services Committee, I have had a chance to review their qualifications. And as the father of a U.S. marine, I agree wholeheartedly with the Senator's contention that these three positions would be very important to fill at a time when the United States has so many security challenges.

Anticipating a productive dialogue with my colleague from Missouri, I would like to ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nominations en bloc: Calendar Nos. 779, 780, 781; that the Senate vote on the nominations en bloc without intervening action or debate; that the mo-

tions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; that any statements related to the nominations be printed in the RECORD; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there an objection?

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection is heard.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

Mr. HAWLEY. I would like to say a word, if I could, about the nature of my objection.

It has been now almost a year since the attack at Abbey Gate in Kabul in Afghanistan, almost a year since we lost 13 American servicemembers in that tragic attack, almost a year since hundreds of American civilians were left behind enemy lines, abandoned by this administration to fend for themselves against our enemies. And that attack claimed the lives, among the 13, of CPL Jared Schmitz, from Wentzville, MO.

I was thinking of Corporal Schmitz again just the other day when I was driving past the bridge in Wentzville that will soon be named for him. I am glad that Corporal Schmitz is getting some of the honor that he deserves, but let's be honest. As his father said to me just hours after we learned of his death: What would be far better—far better, indeed—would be for Corporal Schmitz, who is a very young man, to be with us. He was just at the beginning of his service, just at the beginning of his life. And while he was proud, I am sure, to give his life for his country—it is what he volunteered to do—we owe it to him, I owe it to him, to try and find out why—why—this attack at Abbey Gate happened. How was it that a civilian evacuation was not ordered in time? Why was it that this administration ignored repeated warnings from military commanders on the ground about the dangers that were mounting in Kabul in Afghanistan? Why was the withdrawal a debacle?

Now, I want to give central command some credit. They have commissioned an investigation on this point and issued a report, and I have some of it here with me. This is just the unclassified portion. It is 6,000 pages long. I will tell you, having been through all of it with my team, it is very exhaustive. It took them months to do. They interviewed commanders on the ground. They interviewed military members who were there at the time. They interviewed State Department officials and DOD officials.

Their conclusions that are set out here in this report are truly, truly stunning. What they found is that military commanders repeatedly warned the White House—repeatedly—that the situation in Afghanistan was deterior-

ating rapidly, that the danger to American troops were high, that the danger to American civilians was high and, indeed, potentially lethal. And what did the administration do? It ignored these warnings.

The CENTCOM investigation shows that Tony Blinken's State Department and Jake Sullivan's National Security Council dragged their feet for weeks and, indeed, months on end. It shows the State Department wouldn't even talk about an evacuation—wouldn't even speak of it—until it was too late. And the worst of it is, after this botched withdrawal, after this tragic loss of life, the administration took efforts to cover up what had happened. And we are still in the midst of this coverup.

Just last November, Homeland Security Secretary Mayorkas testified—testified—that—and I am quoting him now:

Biometric and biographic information was collected from every individual evacuated from Afghanistan.

Every individual, that is his statement.

He testified that the administration—I am quoting him now:

(Took a whole-of-government approach, ensuring that Afghans arriving in the United States have been thoroughly screened and vetted.

That simply is not true, and we know it isn't true because the DOD inspector general just released a report debunking it, finding that U.S. Agencies did not use available data when vetting Afghan evacuees, finding that some evacuees with derogatory information could not be located, including individuals whose latent fingerprints have been found on improvised explosive devices and are known or suspected terrorists.

Here is my point: Almost a year after this tragedy, almost a year after this debacle, there has still been no accountability.

Mr. KAINE. Mr. President.

Mr. HAWLEY. No accountability. There has been no one fired. There has been no one relieved of command. This administration has stonewalled. They have dragged their feet. They have refused to cooperate. Oh, we have had hearings, and they have had briefings almost entirely behind closed doors.

Here is my request. It is what I promised Corporal Schmitz's father I would do on the morning that I spoke to him, that I would seek accountability for what happened in Afghanistan, and that is exactly what I intend to do. It is what I have been doing, many a time have I been on the floor for the last 11 months seeking accountability. And I have been stonewalled at every single turn.

What I have asked for months on end is that the Armed Services Committee hold a public hearing on this investigation—a public hearing—not behind closed doors, not without the press, not cut off from the American people—a public hearing, and I have been denied every time.

So what I am going to do today is I am going to enter this report into the RECORD so that the American people can see what U.S. Central Command found. And until we have that accountability in public, I will continue to ask that the Senate observe regular order and actually vote on these nominees.

I yield the floor.

Mr. KAINÉ. Will the Senator yield for a question?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Virginia.

Mr. KAINÉ. Mr. President, if my colleague from Missouri would yield for a series of questions, I want to make sure that I understand the objection. I certainly understand the objection as indicated with respect to seeking accountability for Afghanistan. I understand that point.

Is it correct that in the committee, however, you supported each of the three nominations who are proffered on the floor today?

Mr. HAWLEY. A parliamentary question, Mr. President: Do I have the floor when I respond?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator has yielded for a question. So he has the floor.

Mr. HAWLEY. But I am not asking the question. He is asking me the question.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. But you were the one who yielded to the Senator from Virginia for a question. So you still maintain the floor.

Mr. HAWLEY. No, I have yielded the floor. My remarks were concluded. So the Senator has the floor. I am happy to respond.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Will the Senator yield for a response?

Mr. KAINÉ. I will yield for a response, yes.

Mr. HAWLEY. Say it one more time, Senator. I can answer.

Mr. KAINÉ. My question was: I believe, in the Armed Services Committee, these three individuals, you supported their nominations for reporting to the floor. And I just want to make sure that I am accurate about that.

Mr. HAWLEY. That is incorrect, Senator. I reported as a no.

Mr. KAINÉ. On all three?

Mr. HAWLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. KAINÉ. Is it the Senator's position today that you do not object to them individually but there are other Members of your caucus who individually object to them?

Mr. HAWLEY. I do object to them, Senator. Are you asking me if I object to having a vote on them? Or are you asking me if I object to them?

Mr. KAINÉ. I will rephrase the question.

Do you object to having a vote on them? So, for example, I can modify the motion to suggest to seek unanimous consent that we schedule a vote on these three nominees instead of trying to move them en bloc.

Mr. HAWLEY. Yes.

Mr. KAINÉ. I would be very happy to amend my motion to that, if you would find that acceptable.

Mr. HAWLEY. Yes. A vote, I would like, Senator, but there are other Republican Members who have objections to all three nominees, and I am not authorized to consent for them.

Mr. KAINÉ. Then let me ask one final question. If we are able to clear the objections of others, would you agree—at a time that is convenient for the floor leaders of each party—to a recorded vote on the three nominees, if we were able to clear the objections with your other colleagues?

Mr. HAWLEY. I would like to have a recorded vote. Are you asking me if I would vitiate cloture, Senator?

Mr. KAINÉ. Yes, move to a final passage vote, on which you would be able to express your views on each of these nominees.

Mr. HAWLEY. I would like to have a cloture vote and a recorded vote. I would like to observe regular order on each of these, unless we can make some progress on having a public hearing on this report. That is my position at this time. Again, I am not authorized to negotiate for anybody else.

Mr. KAINÉ. I yield the floor.

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the first part of an investigation directed by the U.S. Central Command concerning the Abbey Gate bombing in Afghanistan in August 2021.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD as follows:

UNITED STATES CENTRAL COMMAND,
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY COMMANDER,
15 September 2021.

MEMORANDUM FOR COMMANDER, UNITED STATES ARMY CENTRAL

From: Vice Admiral James J. Malloy, Deputy Commander, United States Central Command.

Subject: Memo Directing U.S. Army Central (USARCENT) to Conduct an Army Regulation (AR) 15-6 Investigation into the Facts and Circumstances Surrounding the Attack at Abbey Gate, Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) on 26 August 2021.

I am directing the Commander, USARCENT to appoint an AR 15-6 investigation into the facts and circumstances surrounding the attack upon U.S. forces located at the Abbey Gate at HKIA, Kabul, Afghanistan on 26 August 2021. This AR 15-6 investigation will be a holistic review of the facts and circumstances surrounding the attack. USARCENT is directed to conduct an in-depth examination of all relevant aspects which gave rise to the attack. The AR 15-6 should closely examine tactical-level actions of U.S. personnel, gate operations, force protection and posture, readiness, leadership, and all other actions before, during and after the attack.

BACKGROUND

Recently the Commander, USCENTCOM directed his staff, Component Commands, and relevant supporting commands to conduct an after-action review (AAR) of the Afghanistan non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO). This AR 15-6 is a separate requirement from that AAR.

DISCUSSION

This AR 15-6 will be conducted in accordance with Service regulations. USARCENT will provide the completed AR 15-6 to Head-

quarters, USCENTCOM no later than 1 October 2021. If additional time is required, this request must be approved by the Commander.

Finally, to thoroughly examine the facts and circumstances of this attack, Component Commands, subordinate commands and other supporting commands are directed to assist USARCENT investigators during the course of this AR 15-6 as applicable.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY, 3RD EXPEDITIONARY SUSTAINMENT COMMAND,

ACTS-SCK-DO, 22 October 2021.

MEMORANDUM FOR LTG RONALD P. CLARK, COMMANDER, THIRD ARMY/U.S. ARMY CENTRAL, SHAW AIR FORCE BASE, SC

Subject: Findings and Recommendations—Attack Against U.S. Forces Conducting NEO at Hamid Karzai International Airport on 26 August 2021.

1. BLUF. See EXSUM at enclosure 7.

2. Background: On 26 August 2021, U.S. Marines were conducting a Non-combatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) at the Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) as part of a larger joint force operation to conclude U.S. combat operations in Afghanistan. Eleven Marines, one Navy Corpsman, and one Army PSYOP Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) were killed in an attack at the entry control point (ECP) known as Abbey Gate. As a result of the deaths of U.S. Service Members in combat, LTG Ronald P. Clark, Commander, Third Army/U.S. Army Central, at the direction of Gen McKenzie, Commander, U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), appointed me to investigate the surrounding facts and circumstances.

a. Scope. In accordance with (IAW) AR 15-6, I was appointed to investigate the facts and circumstances and address the following matters:

- (1) Actions before, during, and after the attack;
- (2) Force Protection, specifically including pertinent issues associated with:
 - (a) Force Posture, and
 - (b) Gate Operations.
- (3) Readiness;
- (4) Leadership;
- (5) Medical Considerations;
- (6) Chronology/Timeline of Events.

b. Time Extensions. My initial appointment order, dated 17 September 2021, required me to complete my investigation no later than 1 October 2021 (enclosure 1).

After careful analysis, I requested an extension to 22 October 2021 to ensure I could conduct sufficient interviews of widely dispersed forces and collect important products and documents to provide a complete investigation. You granted me the requested extension on 22 September 2021 (enclosure 2).

c. Methodology. The investigation follows the procedures in AR 15-6 and the appointment memorandum, with one exception. After consulting with my legal advisor, I determined the use of memorandums for record (MFRs) to capture interviews was a more appropriate method, given the subject matter and personnel involved. I spoke with my legal advisor and also resolved conflicts in the evidence, and discussed the use of any self-serving statement that I relied upon.

(1) The Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command (MARCENT), MajGen Paul Rock, assigned two Marine Corps Officers, (TEXT REDACTED) to perform duties as both subject matter experts and assistant investigating officers (enclosures 3 and 4).

(2) Additionally, I requested appointment of my Command Judge Advocate, (TEXT REDACTED) investigating officers (enclosures 4 and 5).

3. Findings of facts.

a. Task Organization. Before addressing the directed matters, it is of extreme importance to describe and clarify the task organization and command relationships (COMREL) between units executing operations at HKIA from 1–31 August 2021. The below descriptions are also enclosed in block and line charts (enclosure 8).

(1) 1–16 August 2021.

(a) RADM Pete Vasely, Commander, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan (Forward) (USFOR-A FWD), was the overall commander throughout the execution of operations in Afghanistan during the month of August. USFOR-A FWD was chartered as a Diplomatic Assurance Platform (DAP) and Joint Task Force (JTF) for operations in Afghanistan (exhibits 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 21). USFOR-A FWD was also Special Operations Joint Task Force-Afghanistan (SOJTF-A). Elements of the 3/10 Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) augmented USFOR-A FWD staff and security forces at the Embassy (exhibits 126, 247). The Commander of 3/10 IBCT, (TEXT REDACTED) also served as Chief of Staff for USFOR-A FWD, and commander of two ground forces, Task Force (TF) Polar Bear and TF Wild Boar, which supported the Embassy and HKIA (exhibits 21, 22, 126, 247).

(b) JTF-Crisis Response (CR), commanded by BGen Farrell Sullivan, arrived at HKIA on 20 July 2021, to prepare for a potential NEO. Beginning in May 2021, USFOR-A FWD had tactical control (TACON) of JTF-CR for planning, and then for NEO execution in August (exhibits 10, 11, 15, 18).

(c) The 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), (TEXT REDACTED) sent its Command Element (CE) and Battalion Landing Team (BLT), 1/8 Marines to HKIA on 14 August 2021 to set conditions for NEO (exhibits 15, 100, 102, 104). JTF-CR had TACON of the 24th MEU, which had TACON of 1/8 Marines (exhibits 100, 102, 104).

(d) Elements of 1/82 IBCT arrived at HKIA throughout 15–16 August 2021. JTF-CR initially had TACON of the 1/82 elements, received them at the flight line, and put them into defensive positions (exhibits 15, 100, 102, 121, 125).

(e) 2/1 Marines, the ground combat element (GCE) for the CENTCOM Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force (SPMAGTF), began arriving at HKIA in the early morning of 16 August 2021 (exhibits 53, 54, 55, 76, 77). The 24th MEU had TACON of 2/1 Marines (exhibits 10, 11, 53, 54, 76, 77, 100, 102).

(2) 17–28 August 2021. The Tactical Command Post (TAC) for the 82nd Airborne Division, commanded by MG Christopher Donahue, arrived to HKIA in the early morning hours of 19 August 2021 (exhibits 13, 21, 125). With the TAC's arrival, Gen McKenzie altered the task organization, granted USFOR-A FWD TACON of the 82nd Airborne Division, and gave the 82nd TACON of JTF-CR (exhibits 10, 11, 238). JTF-CR retained TACON of Marine forces until departure, while 82nd Airborne Division retained TACON of 1/82, and additional Army combat formations. However, USFOR-A FWD retained TACON of JTF-CR for NEO. and JTF-CR coordinated with 82nd Airborne Division (exhibits 125, 40). Marine units also executed an alternate COMREL, as 2/1 Marines reported directly to JTF-CR, despite the fact the 24th MEU had TACON of 2/1 (exhibits 18, 53, 100). 1/82 IBCT assumed TACON of TF Polar Bear and TF Wild Boar (exhibits 10, 126, 247).

(3) 28–30 August 2021.

(a) USFOR-A FWD departed HKIA in the early morning hours of 28 August 2021. MG Donahue, 82nd Airborne Division Commander, assumed command of all operations at HKIA until his departure at 0002 on 31 August 2021 (exhibits 131 21, 125, 246).

(b) JTF-CR and all Marine forces departed by the morning of 30 August 2021 (exhibits 15, 18). No Marine forces subordinate to JTF-CR were task organized under the 82nd Airborne Division during the last two days of the NEO.

(4) Adjacent Forces.

(a) Taliban. On 16 August 2021, RADM Vasely began to coordinate with Taliban forces for additional crowd control and security of HKIA (exhibits 13, 20, 21, 23). USFOR-A FWD's primary point of contact for coordination was local Taliban Commander, (TEXT REDACTED) (exhibits 13, 20, 21, 23). U.S. commanders and leaders at all echelons coordinated with Taliban forces to clarify security tasks and responsibilities (exhibits 53, 76).

(b) Turkish Military Forces. Turkish Forces were present on HKIA prior to the NEO and responsible for security of northern HKIA and working through Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) to secure the remaining perimeter (exhibits 15, 18). JTF-CR, and later USFOR-A FWD, coordinated with the Turkish Military Forces for security tasks and evacuation efforts (exhibits 15, 18).

(c) United Kingdom Forces. The U.K. had a large force presence, led by (TEXT REDACTED) on HKIA and at the adjoining Barron Hotel (exhibits 13, 15, 18, 21, 126). This force consisted of three companies from 2nd Battalion, Parachute Regiment (2 PARA) and two companies from 3 PARA, for a combined force of approximately 550 troops, (TEXT REDACTED) (exhibit 126). Commanders and leaders at all levels worked with the U.K. Forces at Abbey Gate, coordinating their security and evacuation efforts (exhibits 13, 15, 18, 21, 53, 56, 65, 76, 77).

(d) Afghan National Strike Unit (NSU). This organization was affiliated with U.S. interagency activities and integrated into the security of HKIA on 16–17 August 2021 (exhibits 13, 15, 18, 21). USFOR-A FWD worked through U.S. Embassy Kabul (USEK) personnel to coordinate with NSU (exhibits 18, 21).

b. Actions before, during, and after the attack.

(1) Key Findings.

(a) By 25 August, Abbey Gate was the Main Effort for Gate Operations at HKIA.

(b) At approximately 1736 local time, 26 August 2021, a single explosion occurred at Abbey Gate.

(c) There was no complex attack; it was a single suicide bomber not accompanied by enemy small arms fire.

(d) How the bomber bypassed Taliban checkpoints to get to the canal is unknown. There were multiple avenues of approach to the canal continuously used by Afghans to bypass Taliban checkpoints. The bomber likely used one of these avenues. No Marines at Abbey Gate recall any civilian using U.S. identification to get closer to their position at the time of the attack.

(e) The attack at Abbey Gate killed between 160–170 civilians. There is no evidence the Marines' response to the attack caused further harm to civilians or fratricide. A potential civilian casualty was reported during interviews with 2/1 Marines. A Platoon Commander reported the casualty occurred during initial gate operations on 20 August and the injury, or possible death, was caused by a flash-bang grenade.

(2) USFOR-A FWD

(a) USFOR-A FWD was task organized to fill the command and staff billets of SOJTF-A specifically NATO Special Operations Component Command-Afghanistan (NSOCC-A) (exhibits 20, 21). CENTCOM, after consulting with outgoing USFOR-A Commander, GEN Miller, established USFOR-A FWD as a DAP prior to its deployment to Af-

ghanistan (exhibits 20, 21). The DAP's mission was to provide indications and warnings (I&W) for USEK, coordinate military activities in Afghanistan (security cooperation, targeting), and be prepared to command and control NEO (exhibits 20, 21). USFOR-A FWD developed a trigger matrix for preparation and execution of NEO, and shared it with USEK staff (exhibits 20, 21, 22). USFOR-A FWD used the trigger matrix as a tool to measure the Taliban's advancement and convince USEK staff to prepare for NEO (exhibits 20, 21, 22). However, USEK staff showed little interest in planning for NEO (exhibits 15, 18, 20, 21, 22). Despite the Taliban's rapid advance towards Kabul, on 12 August USEK only planned to evacuate 250 personnel by 31 August (exhibit 21). On 14 August, the Ambassador committed to evacuating the Embassy, but his personnel were unprepared and had taken few steps to reduce their footprint or destroy sensitive equipment/information (exhibits 20, 21, 22, 146). USEK security forces and the USFOR-A FWD (TEXT REDACTED) evacuated the final personnel from the Embassy to HKIA at 0100 on 16 August. Most USEK personnel departed Afghanistan shortly thereafter (exhibits 15, 18, 20, 21, 22).

(b) At HKIA, USFOR-A FWD was responsible for up and out coordination. They communicated daily with various elements of the interagency, to include Department of State (DoS) and the White House. They also coordinated with partner nations seeking support with evacuation, and coordinated with the Turkish Military, the Taliban, and the NSU to establish and maintain security of the airfield (exhibits 13, 15, 18, 20, 21, 22).

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. MARKEY). The Senator from Louisiana.

TRIBUTE TO KIM HOLDEN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I rise today for two reasons: one happy, one not so happy.

First, I want to take a moment to recognize a much admired Louisiana journalist. I am referring to Ms. Kim Holden from the wonderful city of New Orleans in my State. Kim has just retired from WVUE, which we sometimes call FOX 8 News, in Louisiana, and Ms. Holden has been with FOX 8 News for 34 years.

Kim, if I may call her by her first name, is Louisiana through and through. She is what most of us would call a star-spangled professional. Ms. Holden graduated from St. Mary's Dominican High School. I know, to some of you, that doesn't mean much, but it is an extraordinarily good school in my State.

She started out at Tulane University. She wanted to study premed, but she realized pretty quickly that premed wasn't for her. She discovered her love for journalism, and she went to and graduated from Loyola University in New Orleans with a major in communications.

She took her first job in 1988 as an intern at WVUE FOX 8, and she never left. Kim's talent and intelligence was quickly recognized at FOX 8. She was hired almost immediately after being an intern as a part-time production assistant.

Throughout her 34 years at FOX 8, she has worked as a producer, as a reporter, as a weekend anchor, and as an assistant news director. In 2005, Ms. Holden started anchoring the morning

newscast, and she has coanchored at 5 and 10 p.m. for the last 12 years.

It is a very unique thing, as you know, Mr. President, in television to work your entire career in one place, particularly in your hometown. Most journalists move from city to city—not Kim. She loves New Orleans, and New Orleans loves her back.

I have been interviewed any number of times, with great admiration from Ms. Holden—not always with great joy because Kim is tough. She is tough as a boot as a journalist. She does her job, but she is very, very fair. She is in a world now of agenda journalists who have an agenda of their own—not Kim Holden. Not Kim Holden. She called the balls and the strikes. I don't even know what party she is in. I don't care which party she is in. She was just a pro.

Kim, as I said, has retired, and she has had an extraordinary career. When you go back and look at her awards, she has received an Emmy and two Edward R. Murrow Awards for reporting. The Associated Press named her Reporter of the Year twice.

Throughout her career at FOX 8 News, Kim has covered everything from the COVID-19 pandemic to hurricanes, including Hurricane Katrina, to the New Orleans Saints winning the Super Bowl.

I think, in her next chapter, Ms. Holden is going to spend some quality time—she deserves it—with her husband Bobby and her four children and her six grandchildren.

So I just wanted to recognize Kim Holden today and to thank her for giving so much to the profession of journalism and to thank her for giving so much to my State in Louisiana. And I wish her the best in her next chapter.

ENERGY

Mr. President, now on the less pleasant subject which I wish I didn't have to talk about—deeply, profoundly stupid; deeply, profoundly stupid—that is the only way that I know how to describe one of the worst decisions by an administration that has become famous for bad decisions. I am talking about President Biden's assault on sustainable, affordable energy.

The people of Louisiana know, and the people of America know that they are now paying \$90 to fill up their cars and tanks with gas because the Biden administration killed the Keystone Pipeline, canceled our offshore oil leases, and forfeited America's energy independence. We were energy independent. The Biden administration forfeited it.

What seems to be underappreciated, however, is how President Biden's agenda is driving up the price not just of oil but of all kinds of necessities that American and Louisiana families need every day. It is not just about oil and gas. It is about everything.

Not only do most goods get to our homes after riding in trucks and planes and cars and ships powered by gas or diesel, but a lot of our plastics and

other products, if you think about it, they are also made from petroleum. Actually, only 60 percent of oil in the world gets used as a fuel. Forty percent of the global oil supply ends up in other things, things other than cars and trucks—in products.

That means that it doesn't just cost people more to get to and from the store. It means almost everything in the store costs more because of its connection to oil. Some medicines come from oil. Microfiber comes from oil. Mascara comes from oil. Synthetic leather comes from oil.

Do you have a phone case or a handbag or a chair or a car made with plastic? That is oil. That is oil.

Now, not everything is made from oil. Some goods that you buy are not made from that natural resource. But I bet they are packaged in plastic. And all of these items, all of these household necessities are casualties of President Biden's assault on sustainable energy.

Here is a fat fact: Our economy can't run without fossil fuels. Now, I am not suggesting that fossil fuels should be our only source of energy. Certainly, we should take advantage of the efficiencies we can find in wind. I believe in wind and solar. I believe in solar—and nuclear and hydrogen and hydroelectric. But part of a sensible, sustainable, affordable energy plan has to include fossil fuels.

Ours is the greatest economy in all of human history. It can't run without energy, and 80 percent of our energy today comes from fossil fuels. That is just a fat fact.

The truth is that American ingenuity—and I am referring to fossil fuels—has made the most out of one of the most versatile resources that the world has ever known, but the Biden White House is determined to punish us for that innovation—just determined to punish us—by making every single part of the American dream more expensive. Even necessities that aren't directly made from petroleum depend on affordable fuel to reach American families.

Record high inflation and gas prices have sent Americans to food pantries. Why? Because even fruits and eggs and milk are becoming unaffordable. The latest reports show that many Americans are paying 8.6-percent higher prices today than they were last year. But we know it is more than that. I know those are the official government numbers, but we know it is more than that. Eggs are up 32 percent. Milk is up 16 percent. Flour is up 14 percent. Baby food—when you can find it—is up 13 percent. These aren't luxury items. These are staples that Americans depend on every single day.

I mean, why is a Louisiana man telling us “[m]y food budget is insane”? My food budget is insane. “[I]t's gone up \$100-150 a week. So, it's becoming more and more difficult, to buy the same thing I bought a year or two years ago.”

That is not just a Louisianian talking. That is all across America.

Why did a woman in Baton Rouge realize that fruits and vegetables—not sirloin steak, fruits, and vegetables—are breaking her bank? She is cooking more with rice and bread instead of fruits and vegetables. The high grocery prices for this lady are gutting her and her family like a fish. And that is just a fact—a very unhappy one, but it is a fact.

Now, high oil prices are also waterboarding our farmers, which contributes to these high food prices. Did you know that we make industrial fertilizer from fossil fuels? And when natural gas costs more, so does fertilizing a field of wheat or corn or soybeans. Some of our herbicides right now are twice as expensive as they were, if farmers can find them.

Tractors drink diesel. Duh. So do irrigation systems. A gallon of diesel—1 gallon—a year ago, you know what it was? It was \$3.23. You know what it is today? It is \$5.20.

Now, what does this mean for Louisiana rice farmers and other growers? For every extra dime farmers spend on a gallon of diesel—every extra dime—a grower will spend about \$4.50 more for an acre of rice, \$2.30 more for an acre of cotton, and an extra \$1.74 for an acre of corn.

Corn growers—I mentioned corn growers—they also depend on nitrogen fertilizer, which we make with methane. And then corn—I mentioned corn—corn goes into cereal. It goes into sweetened drinks, peanut butter, baby food, ketchup, salad dressing.

You know, I don't mean to be ugly, but this administration's energy policy is deeply, profoundly stupid. And it is dangerous.

So my people are feeling President Biden's gas hike from the gas pump to the grocery store, to the doctor's office.

A lot of the raw materials that make our medicines and healthcare products are made from—guess what—petroleum.

Oil goes into our burn creams. Do you ever burn yourself, have to go to the local grocery store or the local pharmacy, buy something to put on your burn? That cream comes from oil.

You have allergies? Those allergy pills are made, in part, with oil.

Do you ever get a cold, take a little NyQuil, take some cold tablets? You need oil to make them. Our kids' gummy vitamins are made with oil. The bandaids in your medicine cabinet, they are made from oil.

The President's assault on fossil fuels is hitting my people in Louisiana, and they are hitting the American people so hard they are coughing up bones. My people and the people of America are increasingly having to dip into their savings accounts just to afford everyday items, not to take a cruise, not to buy a new car, not to buy some new clothes to look good at church on Sunday—for household necessities.

And on top of that, in addition to going into their savings account, my people and the people all across America are having to charge more and more and more to their credit cards, not for luxuries but for staples, for necessities.

All of this inflation caused, in part, by the President's bone-deep, down-to-the-marrow stupid energy policy is costing the average American and Louisiana family \$635 a month.

Now, think about that—\$635 a month. Let's call it \$7 to \$8,000 a year. If you are a mom making \$40,000 a year and you are a dad making \$40,000 a year and you have got two children and you have a home—nothing special, you know, \$200,000 home; it has a mortgage—mom and dad have to go to work. So they have to have automobiles. They have car payments. They are using every penny of that \$80,000 a year. And now, all of a sudden, here comes inflation, and they have got to come out of pocket with an extra \$7 to \$8,000 a year. Where is the money going to come from? And just about every middle-class American is experiencing that right now.

Now, recently, the President sent a letter. He sent a letter to the top oil companies. In the letter—it was kind of a snippy letter, frankly—he demanded that the oil companies ramp up their refining operations to try to slow the rising energy prices and to shore up supply. Isn't that special? The same President—he ran on it. He did it. He ran on it. He said he would do it, and he has done it. The same President who promised to end fossil fuels is now blaming the energy industry for historical oil and gas prices.

The truth is, this administration refuses to accept responsibility for bad policies. And I don't know why they pursued this policy, other than just to try to check off a promise made to satisfy the woke agenda.

For the sake of Americans' economic futures and for the sake of our national security, we cannot continue to rely on foreign oil imports—we can't—while pretending to run this country using wind, solar, and wishful thinking because that is what the President's new policy is on energy. It is wind. It is solar. It is wishful thinking. Wishful thinking doesn't fill gas tanks or grocery carts.

And the President this week will be in Saudi Arabia. He is not there as a tourist. He is in Saudi Arabia to beg the Saudis to produce more oil, after he has already forfeited America's energy independence, and he refuses to take his boot off the throat of the oil and gas industry to allow our oil and gas producers to produce our own oil.

So think about it. This is the President's new energy policy. Let's don't produce our own oil and gas. Let's give up our energy independence. But we have to have oil and gas. So what do we do? The President's new policy is, let's give up our own oil and gas and let's buy oil from foreign countries that

hate us so those foreign countries will have more money to buy weapons to try to kill us. It just makes no sense. And the people of Louisiana deserve better. And the people of America deserve better.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNIZING OLE MISS REBELS AND THE PEARL RIVER COMMUNITY WILDCATS

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, for the second year in a row, the State of Mississippi is the center of the universe for college baseball. Senator HYDE-SMITH and I are proud and delighted this afternoon to congratulate not one but two Mississippi collegiate baseball teams on becoming national champions for their respective divisions this year. Those teams are the Ole Miss Rebels and the Pearl River Community Wildcats.

It was just last year that the Mississippi State Bulldogs won their first-ever College World Series national championship. And with the new year, came even more successful baseball in Mississippi.

Last month, after sweating out selection day, Ole Miss went to the NCAA Division I Baseball Tournament and won 10 out of 11 games, sweeping Oklahoma in the final round of the College World Series to become national champions.

Just weeks earlier, Pearl River Community College, located in Poplarville, MS, defeated Madison College of Wisconsin in the Division II Junior College World Series. After spending the entire season ranked in the top five, Pearl River won five out of six games in the playoffs, defeating Florida State College at Jacksonville, Lansing Community College, and, finally, Madison College in a three-game series finale.

The Wildcats dropped game one to Madison, but then roared back with a 19-to-1 victory in game 2 and a decisive 7-to-2 victory in game 3. They finished their season with a sparkling record of 45 wins and 11 losses.

Just think about this for a moment. Three college baseball national titles in 2 years for the State of Mississippi.

Congratulations also go to the University of Southern Mississippi, which had an excellent season and even hosted their first super regional in Hattiesburg, ending with a record of 47 wins and 19 losses.

This year's Ole Miss championship run is a comeback story for the ages. After spending the early parts of the season ranked No. 1 in the Nation, the Rebels went into a deep slump in April, losing 4 straight series and 11 out of 16 games. In May, they were among the last 4 teams to be included in the field

of 64. But they had finished the regular season hot, and some people believed they just might carry that momentum into the playoffs. And they did, outscoring their opponents 46 runs to 11 down the stretch.

Led by Coach Mike Bianco and Team Captain Tim Elko, Ole Miss beat one team after another—first Arizona and Miami in the regional, then Southern Miss in the Hattiesburg Super Regional, then Auburn and Arkansas in the College World Series, which led to a final best two out of three face-off with Oklahoma.

Game one was a slugfest. The Rebels put up 16 hits, including back-to-back-to-back home runs in the eighth inning by T.J. McCants, Calvin Harris, and Justin Bench—a stunning feat not seen at the College World Series since 1998.

On the mound, the Ole Miss pitchers kept things quiet. Jack Dougherty, Mason Nichols, and Josh Mallitz gave up just three runs, securing a 10-to-3 victory.

The decisive game two was a lot closer. For the first five innings, it was a pitchers' duel between Ole Miss's Hunter Elliot of Tupelo, MS, and Cade Horton of Norman, OK. The bats finally got going for Ole Miss in the sixth when Jacob Gonzalez hit a solo home run. The Sooners quickly answered by knocking in two runs, making it 2 to 1, Oklahoma. In the eighth inning, Ole Miss tied things up with hits by T.J. McCants, Justin Bench, and Jacob Gonzalez, and scored two additional runs on wild pitches, making it 4 to 2.

In the top of the ninth, Brandon Johnson took the mound for Ole Miss and closed out the night with three strikeouts, capping off a magical run for the men from Oxford.

"From last team in, to last team standing," exclaimed the announcer.

And then to Oxford they returned, bringing with them the 30th NCAA championship in Ole Miss history.

The day after winning the title, these national champions were welcomed back to campus by crowds of jubilant supporters as they walked the hallowed pathway known as the Walk of Champions.

On behalf of the entire State of Mississippi, I commend the Ole Miss team and their staff on this historic achievement. Justin Bench, Calvin Harris, Kevin Graham, Kemp Alderman, and Dylan DeLucia all were named to the NCAA's All-Tournament Team.

Dylan DeLucia received the Jack Diesing, Sr. Most Outstanding Player of the Series award for pitching a complete game shutout against the Arkansas Razorbacks, becoming the first recipient of the award in Ole Miss history. And Captain Tim Elko became only the sixth player in history to earn four hits in a Men's College World Series final—not to mention his 46 career home runs, the second most in school history.

I also congratulate Mike Bianco, who has coached Ole Miss for 22 seasons and led the team to 18 playoff appearances,

including two trips to the College World Series in Omaha. He has rightly been named National Coach of the Year by the American Baseball Coaches Association and the Collegiate Baseball Newspaper. He never gave up on his team, and he inspired his players to persevere through the tough times.

I wish Coach Bianco the best of luck this week as he now leads Team USA at an international tournament in the Netherlands, where he is joined by two Ole Miss players, Hunter Elliott and Jacob Gonzalez.

I also congratulate Michael Avalon, Head Coach for the Pearl River Wildcats, who, after leading his team to a national title, was named National Coach of the Year for Division II junior colleges.

I commend the University of Mississippi, Pearl River Community College, the University of Southern Mississippi, and Mississippi State University for carrying on Mississippi's winning tradition.

Two years ago, after a season cut short by the COVID pandemic, Ole Miss catcher Hayden Dunhurst boldly said:

I have never been a part of a team so special . . . We will bring a National Championship to Oxford.

And so they did. Congratulations and Hotty Toddy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Mississippi.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I also am very pleased to congratulate the University of Mississippi baseball team on its recent 2022 NCAA World Series championship.

If there is anything an Ole Miss fan is sure of it is that the Rebels love to keep you on the edge of your seat. Some fans were nervous when the Rebels hit a midseason slump, but, boy, this talented team hit its stride right at the perfect time.

The players knew all along they had it in them to take it all the way. They even issued a warning in early May: Don't let the Rebels get hot. Well, the Rebels did get hot, and they were able to be there to be the team that no one saw coming and the team that no one could stop.

Their impressive and exciting run through this year's College World Series speaks volumes to the Ole Miss baseball program, its leadership, its players, and, of course, its fan base.

Mississippi's energy has been electric following the win, especially at Ole Miss's first-ever national baseball championship this year occurred after Pearl River Community College clinched the NJCAA Division II baseball championship in June and after Mississippi State University's win just last year.

Mississippi's sports culture is strong and it is not to be underestimated. We take great pride in the legacy and inspiring example of these young athletes and their coaches.

To the entire Rebel baseball family, thank you for your hard work and dedication to the sport. To Ole Miss and to

our great State, congratulations and Hotty Toddy.

I yield the floor.

Mr. WICKER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PETERS). Without objection, it is so ordered.

The majority whip.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that all postcloture time on the Barr nomination be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. tomorrow, Wednesday, July 13.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

U.S. SUPREME COURT

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, last month the Supreme Court completed one of its most consequential and, in many ways, disastrous terms in American history, issuing a flurry of decisions that have upended our constitutional landscape.

In the scope of just a few weeks, the Supreme Court's radical new supermajority trampled over decades of longstanding precedent and usurped the power that has been traditionally left to Congress, State legislatures, and even individual Americans.

In fact, for the first time in the history of the United States of America, the Supreme Court revoked a constitutional right: the right to reproductive healthcare.

What we have seen from this Supreme Court is not guided by any coherent philosophy. It is judicial activism, plain and simple. The Court's radical majority is cherry-picking its way across text and history to impose their own ideological agenda on the American people, and, in so doing, the majority is not only damaging the Court's constitutional integrity. They are undermining the health and safety of the American people.

Let me explain, starting with one ruling that will severely limit the Government's ability to address what could be the greatest challenge of our time—the climate crisis. The case was *West Virginia v. the EPA*. The conservative majority on the Court misconstrued the law passed by Congress to side with the fossil fuel industry over the health of the American people.

When Congress enacted the Clean Air Act more than a half century ago, it

charged the Environmental Protection Agency with protecting our air from harmful pollution, including greenhouse gases, which are causing catastrophic and irreversible damage to our planet. As Justice Kagan emphasized in her dissent, if the current rate of emissions continues, children born this year could live to see parts of the eastern seaboard of the United States swallowed by the ocean. Rising waters, scorching heat, and other severe weather events can force mass migration, civil unrest, and, in some parts of the world, even failure of state government. And, of course, Black, Brown, indigenous, and other communities bear the largest burden of environmental disaster.

With the Clean Air Act, Congress rightfully recognized that scientists—not politicians or judges—should be the authority on deciding the best methods to reduce emissions from powerplants. It was under that authority that in 2014 the EPA proposed the Clean Power Plan. That plan would have markedly reduced greenhouse gas emissions, but it never went into effect.

That is important because article III of the Constitution requires that there be an actual case in controversy in order for the Supreme Court to issue a ruling. Because the Clean Power Plan never went into effect, there was no case or controversy to refer to, but the Supreme Court still went out of its way to reject the plan and toss it aside in *West Virginia v. EPA*. Worse yet, the Court claimed it had the authority to do so by relying on something the conservative majority calls “the major questions doctrine.”

Listen to what Justice Kagan said about this in her dissent:

The current Court is textualist only when being so suits it. When that method would frustrate broader goals, special canons like the “major questions doctrine” magically appear as get-out-of-text-free cards.

The “major questions doctrine” might sound like a legal word salad, but it will have serious consequences on America. In short, the radical majority on the Court declared it has the authority to veto any Federal regulation it doesn't care for; that is, unless Congress spells out every single detail decades in advance.

Here is the deal. As good as we are in the Senate and the House, lawmakers are not clairvoyant. We write laws like the Clean Air Act to address evolving unforeseen challenges like the climate crisis, and we grant Agencies the power to create regulations to address these challenges based on their singular expertise.

In *West Virginia v. EPA*, the Supreme Court's radical majority decided that their own ideological goals on the Court were more important than the expertise of the world's top scientists. And with this ruling, the Court has made it clear that they are coming after public Agencies responsible for protecting our public health. They

want to weaken the government's ability to work upon behalf of the American people.

Just days before issuing a decision on *West Virginia v. EPA*, the Court issued another ideologically driven ruling in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen*. With this decision, the Court struck down a New York gun safety law that had been on the books for more than a century. That law placed limits on who is allowed to carry a concealed handgun in public. As a result of the law being struck down, it is all but certain that we will see more guns on the streets of America at a time when gun violence has become so bad that the leading cause of death among children in America would be guns.

The Supreme Court's decision to wipe away a century-old gun safety law was troubling enough, but even worse is the new test it laid out for considering constitutional challenges to other gun laws. Justice Clarence Thomas' majority opinion rejected the legal test that lower courts had applied after the legendary *Heller* case, which sensibly combined historic analysis with present-day public safety considerations. Instead, under Clarence Thomas's reasoning, the majority claims that the only test for whether a gun law is constitutional is historical analysis; that is, whether the current law has a historical analogue.

There is a problem with that in two respects. First, it invites judicial cherry-picking of historical sources, which is exactly what the Clarence Thomas majority did in striking down the New York law. Second, it ignores modern public safety threats posed by firearms which are nothing like the guns that the Framers of the Constitution had in their day.

Think about it. The gun that was fired in the Highland Park Fourth of July parade crowd discharged 90 rounds in just a matter of seconds. No musket in the time of the Founding Fathers was ever used to fire 90 rounds per minute into a crowd watching a Fourth of July parade. There is just no analogue. The *Bruen* decision was not a triumph of originalism. It was a classic example of runaway judicial activism in furtherance of the far-right ideological agenda, and we have to live in the America that it leaves.

That is not the only ruling in the past term that made America less safe. Earlier today, my Judiciary Committee heard a hearing on the Court's decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* which revoked the constitutional right to reproductive healthcare for every woman in America.

This decision is one of the most irresponsible rulings in American history. By overturning *Roe v. Wade*, the majority not only violated five decades of longstanding precedent; they created a healthcare crisis across the country.

Do you realize that every one of these Supreme Court nominees came

before this Judiciary Committee and made it clear that they would respect this precedent? And now look at what has happened. Whatever your thoughts on *Roe* may be, the fact is that it put a profound and personal decision exactly where it should be—in the hands of an individual. Now that the right has been ripped from the American people and handed over to the Government, your constitutional freedoms depend on what State you live in. Your ZIP Code will decide your constitutional right.

You know, for decades, anti-choice activists claimed that overturning *Roe* would finally settle the controversy surrounding abortion. Instead, this Supreme Court has invited chaos. Pregnant women in America are scrambling at this very moment trying to figure out if they can make it to the nearest clinic to receive lifesaving care as they experience complications during pregnancy. And once again, like the *Bruen* decision on firearms, the *Dobbs* decision on abortion is littered with inaccurate historical analysis.

Justice Alito claims that abortion is not constitutionally protected because it is not "deeply rooted in the Nation's history and tradition."

I am not sure what history his law clerks have been reading. As the dissenters in the *Dobbs* case said:

[E]mbarrassingly for the majority—early law in fact does provide some support for abortion rights. Common-law authorities did not treat abortion as a crime before "quickening"—the point when the fetus moved in the womb. And early American law followed the common-law rule. So the criminal law of that time might be taken as roughly consonant with *Roe*'s and *Casey*'s different treatment of early and late abortions.

Just look at one of our Founding Fathers, Benjamin Franklin, who actually published a textbook that included an at-home abortion recipe.

So the *Dobbs* decision is not based on any originalist interpretation of the Constitution or any precedent. It is an ideologically motivated outcome in search of a legal rationale.

This assault on our fundamental freedoms won't end there. The Supreme Court has already signaled they are just getting started. During today's hearing on the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, we discussed Justice Clarence Thomas' concurring opinion in *Dobbs*, in which he argues that the constitutional right to privacy is a fiction.

In that opinion, he declares that the Court should "eliminate" the line of cases guaranteeing the constitutional rights to birth control, marriage equality, and consensual relations between LGBTQ people. There is good reason to take this threat seriously.

Based on the cases the Court has agreed to hear in its next term, which begins in October, it is clear that the majority is once again seeking opportunities to impose its far-right agenda on the American people.

The Court is considering one case that could allow individuals and businesses to openly discriminate against

LGBTQ people. Another case will revisit the question of affirmative action in higher education, and, most concerning, this Court will consider a case that could threaten American democracy as we know it. They will decide whether a State legislature can disregard the will of the voters in their State to appoint a slate of electors who support the losing Presidential candidate. The Presiding Officer knows this issue well from the State of Michigan's experience just a few months ago.

There is a reason why a record number of Americans say they have lost faith in the Supreme Court based on what happened in this term that just concluded. And now they are living in fear that their most cherished rights—basic human rights in America—are on the conservative chopping block.

The tragic irony is that it was Chief Justice Roberts who once said that "justices . . . are like umpires. . . . They make sure everybody plays by the rules, but it is a limited role."

I remember that quote, as I was sitting in the Judiciary Committee when he made it, and I thought the limitation that he suggested for the Supreme Court was an indication of his moderation.

The Court that he has joined, in many of these opinions, is not a Court of limited or moderate means. I wish I could say that that, in fact, were true today. It is not. This radical majority is not comprised of umpires calling balls and strikes. They are, in fact, judicial activists—unelected judges—who are actively undermining the rule of law in America, and there is more to come.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to legislative session and be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(At the request of Mr. DURBIN, the following statement was ordered to be printed in the RECORD.)

CONFIRMATION OF STEVE M. DETTELBACH

• Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, today the Senate voted on the nomination of Steve Dettelbach to be the Director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives—ATF. I commend President Biden for nominating Steve, who I know will excel as ATF Director at a time when enforcement of our country's gun laws is so critical.

As gun violence continues to plague our country and as mass shootings become more and more common, it is

hard not to feel paralyzed by the endless tragedy. But we must take action. I am proud to reflect on this body's efforts to pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, which was signed into law by President Biden last month.

But we must do more, and we must continue to do all that we can to prevent these senseless tragedies from occurring in the first place. That is why this confirmation vote today was so crucial. The ATF is charged with enforcing our Nation's gun laws, but the Agency has been without a Senate-confirmed Director since 2015. How can that be? In a time when firearms have become the leading cause of death among children in our country, how can we expect the ATF to fully function without a permanent Director? Finally, thankfully, that changes today.

I know Steve personally, and I can attest not only to his strong work ethic, but to his extraordinary set of skills and professional experiences that will no doubt serve him well as ATF Director. Steve served on my Judiciary Committee staff as a detailee from the Department of Justice, a role requiring time-sensitive evaluations of a wide range of issues relating to criminal justice and law enforcement. I am grateful for his wise counsel during his 2 years on my staff, and I have taken a great deal of personal pride in observing all of his achievements and leadership roles he has held since that time.

Steve has spent more than two decades as a prosecutor within the Justice Department, and was confirmed unanimously by the Senate to serve as U.S. attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, a position he held from 2009 to 2016. Over the course of his 30-year career, Steve has demonstrated that he is a dedicated, principled, law enforcement official who is highly qualified to take on this position. With the passage of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the Congress proved that it is not so paralyzed that it cannot take reasonable—rational—steps to confront the scourge of gun violence. The Senate can further prove that today by confirming Steve Dettelbach to lead the ATF. There could be no one more qualified for this position.

I regret that personal matters kept me from casting my vote in favor of Steve's confirmation today, but my enthusiastic support for his confirmation remains steadfast. I look forward to continuing that support by doing all that I can to ensure that Steve and the ATF have the resources they need to enforce our Nation's gun laws and protect our communities.

It is no easy task, but I know Steve is ready. And I stand ready to support him, and I urge all other Senators to do the same today.●

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. HAWLEY. Mr. President, had there been a recorded vote, I would have voted no on the confirmations of Executive Calendar No. 1036, Philip A.

Talbert, of California, to be United States Attorney for the Eastern District of California for the term of four years.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO PETE GAGNE

● Ms. HASSAN. Mr. President, I am honored to recognize Pete Gagne of Conway as June's Granite Stater of the Month. Pete is the owner of the Saco River Tubing Center, and this summer, he is spearheading the second Paddle for a Cause campaign to raise money for and lift up local Mount Washington Valley organizations.

Every Wednesday during the 11-week campaign, a portion of every tube, kayak, and rental sale from that day is donated to that week's chosen nonprofit. This year's organizations work on issues such as nature conservation, food insecurity, affordable housing, and service dogs for people with disabilities. Visitors can also pay extra to bring their dogs with them on river expeditions, with all proceeds going to the Conway Area Humane Society. Last year, Saco River Tubing donated over \$3,500.

The Paddle for a Cause program provides much-needed funds to local organizations that are a vital part of the Mount Washington Valley community and helps Granite Staters and tourists alike learn more about all that the vibrant Mount Washington Valley community has to offer.

In addition to fundraising and raising awareness about local organizations, the campaign has an educational component on nature conservation. This is especially important in New Hampshire, since the Granite State is home to many beautiful natural treasures. During every trip on the river, Saco River Tubing employees speak to guests about respecting wildlife and minimizing any negative impact to the ecosystems while on the water. This is particularly important given the influx in visitors that started when Granite Staters and tourists alike were looking for more outdoor activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pete's Paddle for a Cause not only gives back to the community through fundraising, but also educates people on taking care of our natural resources. Pete exemplifies the Granite State spirit of dedication to community, and I commend him for bringing people together to support critical causes. I know that his initiative will have lasting, positive effects for the Mount Washington Valley and the entire State.●

TRIBUTE TO OFFICER NOAH COLE AND OFFICER NICK GREENE

● Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, the Louisville Metro Police Department fields some of the finest officers this Nation has to offer. Nothing could be more

true of Officers Noah Cole and Nick Greene. On the evening of Monday, June 27, 2022, Officers Cole and Greene were starting their evening shift like any other night.

They stopped at Shorty's Food Mart on 18th Street and Broadway in the Russell neighborhood of West Louisville when they were alerted by an alarmed father. The gentleman told the officers that his daughter needed their help. The officers overcame a language barrier with the father and responded immediately to his plea.

They exited Shorty's and ran to the infant, who was in her mother's arms. Officer Greene quickly assessed the situation and determined that the infant was unconscious from choking. He administered back blows to the infant until the blockage was cleared. Simultaneously, Officer Cole contacted fire and EMS support to aid in the care of the infant. EMS personnel arrived on the scene and were able to further care for the infant and calm the parents.

The actions of these two officers directly saved the life of our most vulnerable citizen and stopped the worst-case scenario for any parent: burying their child. Officer Cole and Greene are servant leaders, an asset to the residents of Louisville, and a testament to the Louisville Metro Police Department. I am proud to salute officers Noah Cole, Nick Greene, and the entire Louisville Metro Police Department on a job well done.●

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN KODY JONES

● Mr. PAUL. Mr. President, I rise today to honor the courageous actions of a brave and heroic senior member of the Louisville Fire Department. On February 3, 2022, Captain Kody Jones, a 17-year veteran of the department, went above and beyond the call of duty to save the lives of four people: three adults and one small child.

Around 2 pm, a fire was reported at a home in the 100 block of Stevenson Avenue. Without hesitation, Captain Jones, who was on his way to work, responded to the scene. Once at the residence, Captain Jones safely rescued the four individuals without injury to them or to himself.

Captain Jones then instructed emergency dispatchers on essential details concerning the fire. Using his 17 years of experience, Captain Jones was able to direct responding units to the best position and angle of attack to fight the blaze. He also relayed the fire's size and position and the building's material composition. These details were instrumental in firefighters being able to stop the fire within 1 hour of being on the scene. Following these heroic actions, Captain Jones reported to the fire station to continue to serve on his assigned shift.

Captain Jones' actions that day were critical in saving four lives, minimizing structural damage, and containing the blaze. I salute Captain

Jones for his actions that day and his selfless service to his Louisville and the Commonwealth of Kentucky.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Swann, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

In executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-4418. A communication from the Chief of the Planning and Regulatory Affairs Branch, Food and Nutrition Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Civil Rights Update to the Federal-State Agreement" (RIN0584-AE56) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4419. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pyridate; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9298-02-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4420. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Thiamethoxam; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9816-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4421. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "IN-11669: Cellulose, ethyl 2-hydroxyethyl ether; Tolerance Exemption" (FRL No. 9858-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4422. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "5-decyne-4,7-diol, 2,4,7,9-tetramethyl- and 6-Dodecyne-5,8-diol, 2,5,8,11-tetramethyl-; Exemption from the Requirement of a Tolerance" (FRL No. 9875-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4423. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Acquisition and

Sustainment), transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled "Report to Congress on Distribution of Department of Defense Depot Maintenance Workloads for Fiscal Years 2020 through 2022"; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4424. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13818 with respect to serious human rights abuse and corruption; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4425. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 14059 with respect to foreign persons involved in the global illicit drug trade; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4426. A communication from the President and Chair of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the Bank's Strategic Plan for 2022-2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4427. A communication from the President and Chair of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report of the Bank's Strategic Plan for 2022-2026; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4428. A communication from the President and Chair of the Export-Import Bank, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the Bank's Annual Performance Plan for fiscal year 2023, and the Annual Performance Report for fiscal year 2021; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4429. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Manufactured Housing" (RIN1904-AC11) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4430. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Energy Conservation Standards for Unfired Hot Water Storage Tanks" (RIN1904-AD90) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4431. A communication from the Assistant General Counsel for Legislation, Regulation and Energy Efficiency, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Energy Conservation Program: Test Procedures for Residential and Commercial Clothes Washers" (RIN1904-AD95) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-4432. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Pyriofenone; Pesticide Tolerances" (FRL No. 9819-01-OCSP) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4433. A communication from the Chief of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Services, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Endangered and Threatened Wildlife

and Plants; Emergency Listing of the Dixie Valley Toad as Endangered" (RIN1018-BG21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4434. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "MICHIGAN: Final Authorization of State Hazardous Waste Management Program Revisions" (FRL No. 9917-03-R5) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4435. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; ID; Incorporation by Reference Updates" (FRL No. 9395-02-R10) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4436. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Delegation of New Source Performance Standards and National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants for the States of Arizona and California" (FRL No. 9400-03-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4437. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Missouri; Control of Volatile Organic Compound Emissions From Reactor Processes and Distillation Operations Processes in the Synthetic Organic Chemical Manufacturing Industry" (FRL No. 9605-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4438. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Missouri; Restriction of Emissions Credit for Reduced Pollutant Concentrations from the Use of Dispersion Techniques" (FRL No. 9645-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4439. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; North Carolina; Repeal of Delegation Authority" (FRL No. 9646-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4440. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Air Plan Approval; Rhode Island; Infrastructure State Implementation Plan Requirements for the 2012 PM2.5 NAAQS" (FRL No. 9876-01-R1) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4441. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the

report of a rule entitled “Significant New Uses of Chemical Substances; Updates to the Hazard Communication Program and Regulatory Framework; Minor Amendments to Reporting Requirements for Premanufacture Notices” ((RIN2070-AJ94) (FRL No. 5605-02-OCSPP)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4442. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Significant New Use Rules on Certain Chemical Substances (19-4.F)” ((RIN2070-AB27) (FRL No. 7584-01-OCSPP)) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4443. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; California; San Diego County; Reasonably Available Control Technology” (FRL No. 9611-02-R9) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4444. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; NC; NC BART Rule Revisions” (FRL No. 9081-02-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4445. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Missouri; Start-Up, Shutdown and Malfunction Conditions” (FRL No. 9699-02-R7) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4446. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Finding of Failure To Submit a Clean Air Act Section 110 State Implementation Plan for Interstate Transport for the 2015 Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS)” (FRL No. 9895-01-R4) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 21, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4447. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; State Implementation Plan Revisions Required by the 2008 and 2015 Ozone Standards” (FRL No. 9656-02-R1) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 28, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4448. A communication from the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled “FY 2021 Superfund Five-Year Review”; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4449. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Washington; Yakima Regional Clean Air

Agency, General Air Quality Regulations” (FRL No. 9211-02-R10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 1, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4450. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Michigan; Emissions Statement Program and Base Year Emissions Inventory” (FRL No. 9629-02-R5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 1, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4451. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; Indiana; Redesignation of the Indiana portion of the Louisville, Indiana-Kentucky Area to Attainment of the 2015 Ozone Standards” (FRL No. 9686-02-R5) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 1, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4452. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Air Plan Approval; OR; Vehicle Inspection Program and Medford-Ashland PM10 Maintenance Plan Technical Correction” (FRL No. 9756-02-R10) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 1, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4453. A communication from the Manager of the Branch of Listing Policy and Support, Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Regulations for Listing Endangered and Threatened Species and Designating Critical Habitat” (RIN1018-BE69) received on July 11, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4454. A communication from the Chief of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Services, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Marron Bacora and Designation of Critical Habitat” (RIN1018-BE15) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 11, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4455. A communication from the Chief of Domestic Listing, Fish and Wildlife Services, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants; Endangered Species Status for Arizona Eryngo and Designation of Critical Habitat” (RIN1018-BF21) received in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 11, 2022; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-4456. A communication from the Associate Director of the Regulatory Management Division, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Sodium dioctyl sulfosuccinate (CAS Reg. No. 577-11-7); Tolerance Exemption” (FRL No. 9932-01-OCSPP) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on June 28, 2022; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-4457. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of an officer

authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4458. A communication from the Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness), transmitting the report of sixteen (16) officers authorized to wear the insignia of the grade of brigadier general in accordance with title 10, United States Code, section 777; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-4459. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13441 with respect to Lebanon; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4460. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13882 with respect to Mali; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4461. A communication from the Secretary of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, a six-month periodic report on the national emergency that was declared in Executive Order 13581 with respect to significant transnational criminal organizations; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4462. A communication from the Sanctions Regulations Advisor, Office of Foreign Assets Control, Department of the Treasury, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Global Terrorism Sanctions Regulations” (31 CFR Part 594) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 6, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4463. A communication from the Secretary of the Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled “Electronic Submission of Applications for Orders under the Advisers Act and the Investment Company Act, Confidential Treatment Requests for Filings on Form 13F, Form 13F, and Form ADV-NR; Amendments to Form 13F” (RIN3235-AM97) received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 6, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4464. A communication from the Deputy General Counsel for Operations, Department of Housing and Urban Development, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report relative to a vacancy in the position of Chief Financial Officer, Department of Housing and Urban Development, received during adjournment of the Senate in the Office of the President of the Senate on July 6, 2022; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-4465. A communication from the Secretary of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the Uniform Resource Locator (URL) for the publication of the Draft Proposed Program; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

The following reports of committees were submitted:

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 3512. A bill to establish an advisory group to encourage and foster collaborative efforts among individuals and entities engaged in disaster recovery relating to debris

removal, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 117-128).

By Mr. PETERS, from the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, with amendments:

S. 4166. A bill to authorize preparedness programs to support communities containing technological hazards and emerging threats (Rept. No. 117-129).

By Mrs. MURRAY, from the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 958. A bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to expand the allowable use criteria for new access points grants for community health centers.

H.R. 1193. An act to amend title IV of the Public Health Service Act to direct the Director of the National Institutes of Health, in consultation with the Director of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute, to establish a program under which the Director of the National Institutes of Health shall support or conduct research on valvular heart disease, and for other purposes.

S. 4052. A bill to reauthorize a program for early detection, diagnosis, and treatment regarding deaf and hard-of-hearing newborns, infants, and young children, and for other purposes.

By Mr. WARNER, from the Select Committee on Intelligence, without amendment:

S. 4503. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2023 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. WARNER:

S. 4503. A bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2023 for intelligence and intelligence-related activities of the United States Government, the Intelligence Community Management Account, and the Central Intelligence Agency Retirement and Disability System, and for other purposes; from the Select Committee on Intelligence; placed on the calendar.

By Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mrs. MURRAY, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. PADILLA, Ms. CANTWELL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. REED, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. HIRONO, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BENNET, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. KAINE, Ms. WARREN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. BROWN, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. TESTER, Mr. WARNER, and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 4504. A bill to protect freedom of travel and reproductive rights; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

By Mr. ROUNDS (for himself and Mr. TESTER):

S. 4505. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the program for direct housing loans made to Native American veterans, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Veterans' Affairs.

By Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. DURBIN):

S. 4506. A bill to amend title 10, United States Code, to provide for the consideration of the human rights records of recipients of support of special operations to combat terrorism, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. CRAPO (for himself, Mr. PORTMAN, Mr. BRAUN, Mr. MARSHALL, Mr. DAINES, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. THUNE, Mr. CASSIDY, Mr. RISCH, Mr. KENNEDY, Mrs. FISCHER, Ms. COLLINS, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. ROMNEY, and Mr. TOOMEY):

S. 4507. A bill to provide incentives for States to recover fraudulently paid Federal and State unemployment compensation, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Finance.

By Ms. WARREN (for herself, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. PADILLA, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. KAINE, Ms. SMITH, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CASEY, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. KING, and Ms. HIRONO):

S. 4508. A bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to establish a free on-line tax preparation and filing service and programs that allow taxpayers to access third-party provided tax return information and information held by the Internal Revenue Service; to the Committee on Finance.

By Mrs. SHAHEEN (for herself, Mr. ROMNEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CARDIN, and Mr. WICKER):

S. 4509. A bill to provide for security in the Black Sea region, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Ms. DUCKWORTH:

S. 4510. A bill to protect clean air and public health by expanding fenceline and ambient air monitoring and access to air quality information for communities affected by air pollution, to require hazardous air pollutant monitoring at the fenceline of facilities whose emissions are linked to local health threats, to ensure the Environmental Protection Agency promulgates rules that require hazardous air pollutant data measurement and electronic submission at fencelines and stacks of industrial source categories, to expand and strengthen the national ambient air quality monitoring network, to deploy air sensors in communities affected by air pollution, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR):

S. Res. 702. A resolution condemning violence against journalists in Mexico and expressing support for strengthening deterrent, protective, and accountability measures to prevent violence against journalists and safeguard the freedom of the press in Mexico; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

By Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. KELLY, Mr. CAPITO, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. HOEVEN):

S. Res. 703. A resolution designating June 2022 as "National Post-Traumatic Stress

Awareness Month" and June 27, 2022, as "National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Day"; considered and agreed to.

By Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TESTER, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. MCCONNELL):

S. Con. Res. 42. A concurrent resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol on Thursday, July 14, 2022, for the lying in honor of the remains of Hershel Woodrow "Woody" Williams, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient for acts performed during World War II; considered and agreed to.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 424

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Ms. HASSAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 424, a bill to establish in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the Department of State a Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTQI Peoples, and for other purposes.

S. 1156

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the name of the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. SCOTT) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1156, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide for a refundable adoption tax credit.

S. 1489

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. THUNE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1489, a bill to amend the Inspector General Act of 1978 to establish an Inspector General of the Office of the United States Trade Representative, and for other purposes.

S. 1544

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1544, a bill to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to streamline enrollment under the Medicaid program of certain providers across State lines, and for other purposes.

S. 1658

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) and the Senator from Vermont (Mr. LEAHY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1658, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to expand access to breastfeeding accommodations in the workplace, and for other purposes.

S. 1663

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1663, a bill to amend title 18, United States Code, and title 39, United States Code, to provide the United States Postal Service the authority to mail alcoholic beverages, and for other purposes.

S. 1873

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from North Carolina (Mr. TILLIS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1873, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide for Medicare coverage of multicancer early detection screening tests.

S. 2001

At the request of Mr. KING, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2001, a bill to amend the Federal Meat Inspection Act to exempt from inspection the slaughter of animals and the preparation of carcasses conducted at a custom slaughter facility, and for other purposes.

S. 2512

At the request of Mr. MURPHY, the name of the Senator from Delaware (Mr. CARPER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2512, a bill to amend title 28, United States Code, to provide for a code of conduct for justices and judges of the courts of the United States.

S. 2616

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 2616, a bill to create livable communities through coordinated public investment and streamlined requirements, and for other purposes.

S. 3018

At the request of Mr. MARSHALL, the names of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI), the Senator from Florida (Mr. SCOTT) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 3018, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to establish requirements with respect to the use of prior authorization under Medicare Advantage plans, and for other purposes.

S. 3050

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3050, a bill to remove limitations under Medicaid, Medicare, CHIP, and the Department of Veterans Affairs on benefits for persons in custody pending disposition of charges.

S. 3199

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3199, a bill to promote peace and democracy in Ethiopia, and for other purposes.

S. 3308

At the request of Mr. KELLY, the names of the Senator from California (Mrs. FEINSTEIN) and the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA) were added as cosponsors of S. 3308, a bill to authorize the Colorado River Indian Tribes to enter into lease or exchange agreements and storage agreements relating to water of the Colorado River allocated to the Colorado River Indian Tribes, and for other purposes.

S. 3529

At the request of Mr. VAN HOLLEN, the names of the Senator from Penn-

sylvania (Mr. CASEY) and the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3529, a bill to amend the Investor Protection and Securities Reform Act of 2010 to provide grants to States for enhanced protection of senior investors and senior policyholders, and for other purposes.

S. 3625

At the request of Ms. HASSAN, the names of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) and the Senator from Michigan (Mr. PETERS) were added as cosponsors of S. 3625, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to temporarily reinstate the employee retention credit for employers subject to closure due to COVID-19.

S. 3656

At the request of Mr. CARDIN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3656, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to provide hereditary cancer genetic testing for individuals with a history of a hereditary cancer gene mutation in a blood relative or a personal or ancestral history suspicious for hereditary cancer, and to provide coverage of certain cancer screenings or preventive surgeries that would reduce the risk for individuals with a germline (inherited) mutation associated with a high risk of developing a preventable cancer.

S. 3792

At the request of Mr. CARPER, the names of the Senator from Tennessee (Mrs. BLACKBURN) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 3792, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to extend acute hospital care at home waiver flexibilities.

S. 3899

At the request of Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, the name of the Senator from Idaho (Mr. RISCH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3899, a bill to amend the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 to reauthorize and update the Act, and for other purposes.

S. 3963

At the request of Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, the name of the Senator from Alaska (Ms. MURKOWSKI) was added as a cosponsor of S. 3963, a bill to protect survivors from brain injury by authorizing the Secretary of Health and Human Services to collect data on the prevalence of brain injuries resulting from domestic and sexual violence.

S. 3972

At the request of Mr. BOOKER, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. MENENDEZ) were added as cosponsors of S. 3972, a bill to improve research and data collection on stillbirths, and for other purposes.

S. 4004

At the request of Mr. BOOZMAN, the name of the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4004, a bill to alter requirements as-

sociated with small business loan data collection, and for other purposes.

S. 4169

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4169, a bill to require the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to carry out a pilot program to provide assisted living services to eligible veterans, and for other purposes.

S. 4171

At the request of Mr. MENENDEZ, the name of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4171, a bill to reauthorize the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, and for other purposes.

S. 4192

At the request of Mr. CASEY, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) and the Senator from Georgia (Mr. WARNOCK) were added as cosponsors of S. 4192, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to end the tax subsidy for employer efforts to influence their workers' exercise of their rights around labor organizations and engaging in collective action.

S. 4202

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4202, a bill to require an annual budget estimate for the initiatives of the National Institutes of Health pursuant to reports and recommendations made under the National Alzheimer's Project Act.

S. 4203

At the request of Ms. COLLINS, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4203, a bill to extend the National Alzheimer's Project.

S. 4260

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. 4260, a bill to amend the Public Health Service Act to increase the number of permanent faculty in palliative care at accredited allopathic and osteopathic medical schools, nursing schools, social work schools, and other programs, including physician assistant education programs, to promote education and research in palliative care and hospice, and to support the development of faculty careers in academic palliative medicine.

S. 4325

At the request of Ms. SINEMA, the names of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN), the Senator from Iowa (Mr. GRASSLEY), the Senator from Virginia (Mr. KAINE), the Senator from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) and the Senator from Wyoming (Mr. BARRASSO) were added as cosponsors of S. 4325, a bill to amend the Federal Credit Union Act to modify the frequency of board of directors meetings, and for other purposes.

S. 4359

At the request of Mr. OSSOFF, the name of the Senator from New Mexico

(Mr. HEINRICH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4359, a bill to designate the regional office of the Department of Veterans Affairs in metropolitan Atlanta as the “Senator Johnny Isakson Department of Veterans Affairs Atlanta Regional Office”, and for other purposes.

S. 4419

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4419, a bill to require small, medium, and large hub airports to certify that airport service workers are paid the prevailing wage and provided fringe benefits, and for other purposes.

S. 4434

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from New Hampshire (Mrs. SHAHEEN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4434, a bill to protect the privacy of personal reproductive or sexual health information, and for other purposes.

S. 4467

At the request of Ms. SMITH, the name of the Senator from Oregon (Mr. MERKLEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4467, a bill to preserve access to abortion medications.

S. 4478

At the request of Mr. REED, the name of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 4478, a bill to provide for assistance to improve the resilience of historic light stations, to study the long-term protection needs of historic light stations, and to establish a national database of historic light stations, and for other purposes.

S.J. RES. 21

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the name of the Senator from Rhode Island (Mr. WHITEHOUSE) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 21, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States to prohibit the use of slavery and involuntary servitude as a punishment for a crime.

S.J. RES. 25

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 25, a joint resolution proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the United States relating to contributions and expenditures intended to affect elections.

S. RES. 182

At the request of Mr. WICKER, the name of the Senator from Mississippi (Mrs. HYDE-SMITH) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 182, a resolution recognizing the late Gilbert Metz, the last Holocaust survivor who lived in Mississippi, and commending all educators who teach about the Holocaust and all genocide.

S. RES. 669

At the request of Mr. MERKLEY, the names of the Senator from Connecticut (Mr. BLUMENTHAL), the Senator from

Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN), the Senator from California (Mr. PADILLA), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR), the Senator from Arizona (Mr. KELLY), the Senator from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), the Senator from Oregon (Mr. WYDEN) and the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. SMITH) were added as cosponsors of S. Res. 669, a resolution condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war and recognizing the effect of conflict on global food security and famine.

S. RES. 694

At the request of Mr. JOHNSON, the name of the Senator from South Dakota (Mr. ROUNDS) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 694, a resolution expressing support for the designation of July 2022 as “National Sarcoma Awareness Month”.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 702—CONDEMNING VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS IN MEXICO AND EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR STRENGTHENING DETERRENT, PROTECTIVE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AGAINST JOURNALISTS AND SAFEGUARD THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN MEXICO

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. BENNET, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 702

Whereas the United States and Mexico share extensive economic, security, cultural, and democratic ties, especially a mutual commitment to respecting and promoting universally recognized human rights, democratic values, and the rule of law;

Whereas freedom of the press is an essential component of democratic governance, as recognized in the Inter-American Democratic Charter, done at Lima September 11, 2001, and journalists should have the right to report the news objectively, in safety, without retribution or threats thereof;

Whereas attacks against journalists and other media workers is a significant concern for freedom of the press and human rights in Mexico, especially among journalists and other media workers who report on public corruption and illicit activities and are frequently subject to threats, coercion, intimidation, surveillance, forcible relocation, violence, and even death;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, more than 150 journalists have been killed in Mexico since 2000;

Whereas, according to Reporters Without Borders, Mexico was the most dangerous country in the world outside a war zone for journalists for the third consecutive year in 2021 and ranked 127 out of 180 countries in the World Press Freedom Index in 2022;

Whereas, as of 2022, the Committee to Protect Journalists has documented 15 cases of missing reporters in Mexico, the highest number of any country in the world;

Whereas, in 2022, at least 12 extrajudicial killings of journalists have occurred in Mexico, including the killings of—

- (1) José Luis Gamboa Arenas on January 10;
- (2) Alfonso Margarito Martínez Esquivel on January 17;
- (3) Maria Guadalupe Lourdes Maldonado López on January 23;
- (4) Roberto Toledo Barrera on January 31;
- (5) Heber López Vásquez on February 10;
- (6) Jorge Luis Camero Zazueta on February 24;
- (7) Juan Carlos Muñiz on March 4;
- (8) Armando Linares López on March 15;
- (9) Luis Enrique Ramírez on May 5;
- (10) Yessenia Mollinedo Falconi on May 9;
- (11) Sheila Johana García Olivera on May 9; and
- (12) Antonio de la Cruz on June 29;

Whereas at least 9 of the 12 journalists murdered in Mexico in 2022 were killed in direct connection with their work, according to Reporters without Borders;

Whereas the President of Mexico, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, has sometimes demonstrated hostility towards the free press and enabled an unsafe working environment for independent journalists by regularly, publicly disparaging and intimidating journalists who are critical of the policies of or investigate corruption related to associates of his administration;

Whereas perpetrators of violence against journalists in Mexico are rarely held to account, with Mexico ranking among the countries with the most unsolved murders of journalists per capita and more than 95 percent of crimes against journalists in the country going unpunished, according to the International Federation of Journalists;

Whereas initiatives taken thus far by the Government of Mexico to address violence against journalists, namely the creation of the Federal Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (referred to in this preamble as the “Federal Protection Mechanism”) in 2012, have not achieved stated goals and have been marred by significant implementation issues, according to a March 2019 report by the Washington Office on Latin America, including—

- (1) insufficient financial and human resources;
- (2) inadequate risk analysis and protection protocols;
- (3) limited transparency and oversight; and
- (4) limited coordination between local, state, and national entities;

Whereas the decision by President López Obrador to eliminate independent funding for the Federal Protection Mechanism in October 2020 has the potential to further exacerbate the resource constraints of the Federal Protection Mechanism and undermine the ability of the Federal Protection Mechanism to protect at-risk journalists and other human rights defenders;

Whereas, as a result of a failure to rectify recognized issues with the Federal Protection Mechanism, at least 9 journalists have been killed while receiving protection in Mexico, with the majority of such journalists killed during the tenure of President López Obrador, according to Human Rights Watch;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Mexico have expressed concerns about violence against journalists in Mexico, asserting that “impunity in attacks against journalists fosters further violence against reporters and may inhibit the exercise of freedom of expression”, and offered recommendations to address such concerns;

Whereas, on March 10, 2022, the European Parliament passed a resolution on the situation of journalists and human rights defenders in Mexico; and

Whereas the United States Government has expressed concern about violence against journalists in Mexico and demonstrated a willingness to assist the Government of Mexico in strengthening human rights protections and freedom of the press: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses unwavering commitment to and support for strengthening deterrent, protective, and accountability measures to prevent violence against journalists and safeguard the freedom of the press in Mexico;

(2) condemns consistently high levels of violence against journalists in Mexico, including recent and ongoing spikes in extrajudicial killings and high levels of impunity for such violence;

(3) encourages the Government of Mexico—
(A) to strengthen efforts to protect the free press and journalists, including by—

(i) committing sufficient resources to address threats to the free press and journalists; and

(ii) tailoring protection measures to account for the specific challenges of conducting journalistic work;

(B) to ensure a thorough and impartial investigation into all threats of violence reported by journalists and the provision of immediate access to protective measures for journalists who make such reports;

(C) to refrain from actions and statements that create a more hostile environment for the free press and journalists;

(D) to pursue public awareness campaigns to recognize and elevate journalistic work and the freedom of the press;

(E) to pursue effective measures, in close coordination with local and state entities and civil society organizations, to strengthen deterrent, protective, and accountability measures to address violence against journalists; and

(F) to conduct comprehensive and transparent investigations into the deaths of journalists to ensure all responsible parties are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law;

(4) encourages further efforts by the Government of Mexico—

(A) to address deficiencies within the Federal Mechanism for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists (referred to in this resolution as the “Federal Protection Mechanism”);

(B) to bolster the capability of the Federal Protection Mechanism to achieve its stated purpose; and

(C) to develop additional measures that incorporate relevant recommendations by civil society groups, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to safeguard journalists and the free press;

(5) supports efforts by civil society groups, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights—

(A) to monitor violence against journalists and media workers in Mexico;

(B) to provide technical assistance and other support to the Government of Mexico to address concerns about such violence; and

(C) to disseminate accurate information on the state of freedom of the press in Mexico; and

(6) calls on the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development to prioritize the protection of the media and efforts to prevent, investigate, and prosecute cases of violence against journalists in diplomatic engagement with, and foreign assistance to, Mexico.

SENATE RESOLUTION 703—DESIGNATING JUNE 2022 AS “NATIONAL POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS AWARENESS MONTH” AND JUNE 27, 2022, AS “NATIONAL POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS AWARENESS DAY”

Mr. SULLIVAN (for himself, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. TILLIS, Ms. HASSAN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. KELLY, Mrs. CAPITO, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. TUBERVILLE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. HOEVEN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 703

Whereas the brave men and women of the Armed Forces, who proudly serve the United States—

(1) risk their lives to protect the freedom, health, and welfare of the people of the United States; and

(2) deserve the investment of every possible resource to ensure their lasting physical, mental, and emotional well-being;

Whereas, since the events of September 11, 2001, nearly 2,800,000 members of the Armed Forces have deployed overseas and served in places such as Afghanistan and Iraq;

Whereas the current generation of men and women in the Armed Forces has sustained a high rate of operational deployments, with many members of the Armed Forces serving overseas multiple times, placing those members at high risk of enduring traumatic combat stress;

Whereas, when left untreated, exposure to traumatic combat stress can lead to severe and chronic post-traumatic stress responses, which are commonly referred to as post-traumatic stress disorder (referred to in this preamble as “PTSD”) or post-traumatic stress injury;

Whereas many men and women of the Armed Forces and veterans who served before September 11, 2001, live with mental health needs from post-traumatic stress and remain at risk for responses to that stress;

Whereas many post-traumatic stress responses remain unreported, undiagnosed, and untreated due to a lack of awareness about post-traumatic stress and the persistent stigma associated with mental health conditions;

Whereas post-traumatic stress significantly increases the risk of post-traumatic stress responses, including anxiety, depression, homelessness, substance abuse, and suicide, especially if left untreated;

Whereas the Secretary of Veterans Affairs reports that—

(1) between 11 and 20 percent of veterans who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom have post-traumatic stress in a given year;

(2) approximately 12 percent of veterans who served in the Persian Gulf War have post-traumatic stress in a given year; and

(3) approximately 30 percent of veterans who served in the Vietnam era have had post-traumatic stress in their lifetimes;

Whereas public perceptions of post-traumatic stress as a mental health disorder create unique challenges for veterans seeking employment;

Whereas the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, veterans service organizations, and the private and public medical community have made significant advances in the identification, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of post-traumatic stress and the symptoms of post-traumatic stress, but many challenges remain;

Whereas increased understanding of post-traumatic stress can help eliminate stigma

attached to the mental health issues of post-traumatic stress;

Whereas additional efforts are needed to find further ways to eliminate the stigma associated with post-traumatic stress, including—

(1) an examination of how post-traumatic stress is discussed in the United States; and

(2) a recognition that post-traumatic stress is a common injury that is treatable;

Whereas timely and appropriate treatment of post-traumatic stress responses can diminish complications and avert suicides;

Whereas post-traumatic stress—

(1) can result from any number of stressors other than combat, including rape, sexual assault, battery, torture, confinement, child abuse, car accidents, train wrecks, plane crashes, bombings, natural disasters, or global pandemics; and

(2) affects approximately 12,000,000 adults in the United States annually;

Whereas the diagnosis of PTSD was first defined by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980 to commonly and more accurately understand and treat survivors of physical and psychological trauma, including veterans who had endured severe traumatic combat stress;

Whereas the word “disorder” can perpetuate the stigma associated with combat stress, so the more general term “post-traumatic stress” is often preferred; and

Whereas the designation of a National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Month and a National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Day raises public awareness about issues relating to post-traumatic stress, reduces the stigma associated with post-traumatic stress, and helps ensure that individuals suffering from the invisible wounds of war receive proper treatment: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates—

(A) June 2022 as “National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Month”; and

(B) June 27, 2022, as “National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Day”;

(2) supports the efforts of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Defense, and the entire medical community to educate members of the Armed Forces, veterans, the families of members of the Armed Forces and veterans, and the public about the causes, symptoms, and treatment of post-traumatic stress;

(3) supports efforts by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs and the Secretary of Defense to foster—

(A) cultural change around the issue of post-traumatic stress; and

(B) understanding that personal interactions can save lives and advance treatment;

(4) welcomes the efforts of the National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder of the Department of Veterans Affairs and local Vet Centers (as defined in section 1712A(h) of title 38, United States Code) to provide assistance to veterans who are suffering from the effects of post-traumatic stress;

(5) encourages the leadership of the Armed Forces to support appropriate treatment of men and women of the Armed Forces who suffer from post-traumatic stress;

(6) recognizes the impact of post-traumatic stress on the spouses and families of members of the Armed Forces and veterans; and

(7) respectfully requests that the Secretary of the Senate transmit a copy of this resolution to—

(A) the Secretary of Veterans Affairs; and

(B) the Secretary of Defense.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 42—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ROTUNDA OF THE CAPITOL ON THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2022, FOR THE LYING IN HONOR OF THE REMAINS OF HERSEL WOODROW “WOODY” WILLIAMS, THE LAST SURVIVING MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT FOR ACTS PERFORMED DURING WORLD WAR II

Mr. MANCHIN (for himself, Mrs. CAPITO, Mr. TESTER, Mr. ROMNEY, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. HOEVEN, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. COTTON, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. SCHUMER, and Mr. MCCONNELL) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 42

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),

SECTION 1. HONORING THE LAST SURVIVING MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT OF WORLD WAR II

In recognition of Hershel Woodrow “Woody” Williams, the last surviving recipient of the Medal of Honor for acts performed during World War II, his remains shall be permitted to lie in honor in the rotunda of the Capitol on Thursday, July 14, 2022, in order to honor the Greatest Generation and the more than 16,000,000 men and women who served in the Armed Forces of the United States from 1941 to 1945. The Architect of the Capitol, under the direction of the President pro tempore of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, shall take all necessary steps for the accomplishment of that purpose.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I have seven requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a) of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING, AND URBAN AFFAIRS

The Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

The Committee on Finance is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 10:30 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of

the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing on nominations.

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 2:30 p.m., to conduct a closed briefing.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON TOURISM, TRADE, AND EXPORT PROMOTION

The Subcommittee on Tourism, Trade, and Export Promotion of the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Tuesday, July 12, 2022, at 10 a.m., to conduct a hearing.

PRIVILEGES OF THE FLOOR

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I have with me today some summer associates from my office, and I ask unanimous consent that the following of my colleagues be granted floor privileges until August 12, 2022: Mr. John Luke Lary, Mr. Maximo Valobra, Mr. Jakob Greer, Mr. Jase McDonald, and Mr. Matthias Brantley—here in the back.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the following interns in my office be granted floor privileges until August 31, 2022: Cameron Hall, Jacob Tipton, AnnAdair Blackledge, Preston Dibberly, and Olivia Hardwick.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

NOTICE: REGISTRATION OF MASS MAILINGS

The filing date for the 2022 second quarter Mass Mailing report is Monday, July 25, 2022. An electronic option is available on Webster that will allow forms to be submitted via a fillable PDF document. If your office did no mass mailings during this period, please submit a form that states “none.”

Mass mailing registrations or negative reports can be submitted electronically at http://webster.senate.gov/secretary/mass_mailing_form.htm or e-mailed to OPR_MassMailings@sec.senate.gov.

For further information, please contact the Senate Office of Public Records at (202) 224-0322.

RECOGNIZING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration and that the Senate now proceed to S. Res. 653.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 653) recognizing the significance of Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month as an important time to celebrate the significant contributions of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders to the history of the United States.

There being no objection, the committee was discharged, and the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 653) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of May 26, 2022, under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

NATIONAL POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS AWARENESS MONTH

NATIONAL POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS AWARENESS DAY

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 703, submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 703) designating June 2022 as “National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Month” and June 27, 2022, as “National Post-Traumatic Stress Awareness Day”.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and that the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 703) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

AUTHORIZING THE USE OF THE ROTUNDA OF THE CAPITOL ON THURSDAY, JULY 14, 2022, FOR THE LYING IN HONOR OF THE REMAINS OF HERSEL WOODROW “WOODY” WILLIAMS, THE LAST SURVIVING MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT FOR ACTS PERFORMED DURING WORLD WAR II

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate

proceed to the consideration of S. Con. Res. 42, which was submitted earlier today.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 42) authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol on Thursday, July 14, 2022, for the lying in honor of the remains of Hershel Woodrow “Woody” Williams, the last surviving Medal of Honor recipient for acts performed during World War II.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. DURBIN. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (S. Con. Res. 42) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in today’s RECORD under “Submitted Resolutions.”)

ORDERS FOR WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2022

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Sen-

ate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10:30 a.m. on Wednesday, July 13; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Barr nomination, postcloture; further, that if any nominations are confirmed during Wednesday’s session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate’s action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, for the information of the Senate, the first rollcall votes of the day will begin at 11:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10:30 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 6:19 p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at 10:30 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

THE JUDICIARY

CINDY K. CHUNG, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES CIRCUIT JUDGE FOR THE THIRD CIRCUIT, VICE D. BROOKS SMITH, RETIRED.

KELLEY BRISBON HODGE, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE PETRESE B. TUCKER, RETIRED.

KAI N. SCOTT, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE C. DARNELL JONES II, RETIRED.

MIA ROBERTS PEREZ, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE TIMOTHY J. SAVAGE, RETIRED.

JOHN FRANK MURPHY, OF PENNSYLVANIA, TO BE UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA, VICE LAWRENCE F. STENGEL, RETIRED.

CONFIRMATIONS

Executive nominations confirmed by the Senate July 12, 2022:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

ASHISH S. VAZIRANI, OF MARYLAND, TO BE A DEPUTY UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

STEVEN M. DETTELBAUGH, OF OHIO, TO BE DIRECTOR, BUREAU OF ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, FIREARMS, AND EXPLOSIVES.